Introspection and Retrospection of Dalit Literature

N. Shanthanaik

Intraspection and Retraspection of Dalit Literature - a national seminar was conducted at Vijayanagara Sri Krishnadeavaraya university, Bellary. This seminar was sponsored by ICSSR New Delhi. Dalit literature or literary beauty of downtrodden is no longer remained as untouchable in Indian English writing. Novelist, like Mulk Raj Anand, Raja Rao, Mahatma Gandhi and many others tried to portray untouchables life in their writing. But it is not so effective and first hand information like the Branded of Lakshman Gaikawd, Baby Kamble, Namdev Dhasal, C.K. Janu, Bama's Karku and many other novel's and autobiographies. Dalti literature flourished in many regional languages in its maximum extent. The first generation dalit and protest writers and poets were honoured with many lurels and awards. All regional dalit writing was influenced by the great humanist Dr. B.R. Ambedkar and his movement in Maharashtra in particular and India in general. The movement of Phule, Mysore Maharaja Nalvadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar, Sahu Maharaj and many poets of Bhakthi movement. British education and British understanding influenced Indian culture and caste understanding. After colonial rule, Indian downtrodden were liberated from the black age of Manuvadi Hinduism. The same English language today spreading heinous conditions of dalits who are living in India. Today it is emerging genre in literature, this book is important to understand dalit literature in English language and other regional languages too.

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Preface

All genre of literature are exhausted and looking forward to a new approach to be emerged. That new approach or new movement in Indian English literature is dalit sensibility or Dalit discourse. English education, culture and life style liberated many Indians who's life was restricted and controlled by orthodox society. Maharashtra is land which witnessed many social reformers like Phule and Ambedkar who tried to create awareness of human rights among the downtrodden. They also taught importance of education, unity and cleanliness of their surroundings. The result of this preaching yields now in the form of dalit literature and getting prominence. The post-clonial and the concept of subaltern leads a new approach. The concept of nativity is the main factor of dalitism. Dalit biography writers created a new wave and consciousness in Indian English literature. Dalit writers are not well equipped in English language to express their ideas and ideology. Hence some of the able translators translated many biographies of dalit writters who have written in their native language.

This book is compiled of almost 20 different essays of different writers on dalit issues and dalit literature. It could possible because of ICSSR sponsored national level seminar on Dalit discourse. I will take this privilege to thank Prof. Sukhdev Thorat, Director ICSSR, Prof. Majappa D Hosamane, Vice chancellor, Prof. Vijayakumar, Registrar, Robert Jose, Prof. Vimal Thorat, Sri Nagir Nadaff, Chairman, Pragathi Grameen Bank, Suleman Thashildar, CPI Bellary rural police station, M.A. Final

year and previous students, faculty members of Commerce, MBA, Chemistry, Mathematics, Sociology, Political Science, Rangaraj, Registrar, Evaluation and all those who had helped to materialize the conference and this book.

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1

Socio-Economic Life of Dalit in Present Context

—M. Mahadevi

- If you had to give me this birth why did you give thier birth at all?
- You cast me away to be born; you were cruel.
- Where were you at the time of my birth?
- Who did you help then?
- Chokha says: O Lord, of Keshava, Don't let me go.
- Chokhamela.

The above quotation and title of its source provide insight into two problems regarding the Dalit. First is their fatalistic attitude apparent from the above supplication to Lord Keshava, another synonym for Krishna since high castes lord over the Dalit through divine sanction, it is an exercise in futility. Second, the book title, from untouchable to Dalit, illustrates terminological transition from specific to neutral one. That is, adoption of a general term, Dalit (oppressed), in place of Achhut (Untouchable) that is both pejorative and illegal. The above two problems are very much germane to the Dalit discussion.

The population of India is generally classified on a linguistic or on religious basis. These are the only two ways of classifying the people of India, which have been persistently in vogue for a long time. The effect is that outsiders get the impression that, what is of interest

and importance to know about the peoples of India is the religions they profess or the languages they speak. Limited by this interest, they remain content with a knowledge they get about the religions and language that are prevalent in India.

In 2001, the proportion of Dalit population was 16.02% of India's total population. The Dalit population is broadly distributed across Indian states and districts. In 2001, the state of Punjab had the highest proportion of its population as Dalit, at about 29% and the state of Mizoram had the lowest at nearly zero. The government of India recognizes and protects them as scheduled castes. The term Dalit has been interchangeably used with term scheduled castes, and these terms include all historically discriminated communities of India out-caste and untouchables.

While discrimination based on caste has been prohibited and untouchability abolished under the constitution of India, discrimination and prejudice against Dalits in South Asia remains. Since its independence in 1947, India has implemented an affirmative policy of reservation, the scope of which was further expanded in 1974, to set aside and provide jobs and education opportunities to Dalits. By 1995, of all jobs in India, 17.02% of the jobs were held by Dalits, greater than their proportion in Indian population in 1997, India democratically elected K.R. Narayanan, a Dalit, as the nation's president. Many social organizations too have proactively promoted better conditions for Dalits through improved education, health and employment.

Dalits and similar groups are found in India, Nepal, Pakistan and Bangladesh. In addition, the Burakumin in Japan, cagots and Roma in Europe, Al-Akhdam in Yemen, Baekjeong in Korea and midgan in Somalia are excluded from the surrounding community in much the same manner as the Dalit. In fact, a 2012 paper argued

that the European Romas, DNA matches the Dalit in India.

Etymology

The word "Dalit" does not appear in any sacred scriptures or historical texts of India. It is actually a word based on 17th century European nations about the Indian caste system. The word is derived form Sanskrit, and means "Ground", "Suppressed", "Crushed", or "Broken to pieces". It was first used by Jyoti Rao Phule in the nineteenth century, in the context of the oppression faced by the erst - while "Untouchable" castes of the twice-born Hindus.

Meaning

In this meaning part we discuss about what is the meaning of Dalit? What is the meaning of Socio-Economic status?

Firstly, we discuss the what is the meaning of Dalit?

Dalit is a designation for a group of people traditionally regarded as untouchable. Dalits are a mixed population, consisting of numerous social groups from all over South Asia; they speak a variety of languages and practice a multitude of religions. There are many different names proposed for defining this group of people, including Panchamas ("Fifth Varna"), and Asprushya ("Untouchable").

Than we discuss about meaning of Socio-Economic status (SES). SES is an economic and sociological combined total measure of a person's work experience and of an individuals or family's economic and social position in relation to others, based on income, education, and occupation. When analyzing a family's SES, the household income, earners, education, and occupation are examined, as well as combined income, versus with an individual, when their own attributes are assessed.

Socio-Economic status is typically broken into three categories, high SES, middle SES, and low SES to describe the three areas a family or an individual may fall into when placing a family or individual into one of these categories any or all of the three variables (income, education, and occupation) can be assessed. Additionally low income and little education have shown to be strong predictors of a range of physical and mental health problems, ranging from respiratory viruses, arthritis, and coronary disease. These may be due to environmental conditions in their work place, or in the case of mental illnesses, may be the entire cause of that persons social predicament to begin with, Socio-Economics is the social science that studies. How economic activity affects social processes. In general it analyzes how societies progress, stagnate, or regress because of their local or regional economy, or the global economy.

In many cases, Socio-Economists focus on the social impact of some sort of economic change. Such change might include a closing factory, market manipulation, the signing of international trade treaties, new natural gas regulation, etc,.

Such social effects can be wide-ranging in size, anywhere from local effects on a small community to change the entire society. Examples of causes of Socio-Economic impacts include new technologies such as cars or mobile phones, changes in laws, changes in the physical environment (such as increasing crowding within cities), and ecological changes (such as prolonged drought or declining fish stocks). These may affect patterns of consumption. The distribution of incomes and wealth. The way in which people behave (both in terms of purchase decisions and the way in which they choose to spend their time), and the overall quality of life.

The goal of Socio-Economic study is generally to bring about Socio-Economic development, usually in terms of

improvements in metrics such as GDP, life expectancy, literacy, levels of employment, etc.

Although harder to measure, changes in less – tangible factors are also considered, such as personal dignity, freedom of association, personal safety and freedom from fear of physical harm, and the extent of participation in civil society.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC LIFE OF DALIT IN PRESENT CONTEXT

According to one researcher, Dalit refers to "Group of people, who are religiously, culturally, socially and economically oppressed, who belong to the different language and ethnic groups".

SOCIAL STATUS OF DALIT'S

In the context of traditional Hindu Society. Dalit status has often been historically associated with occupations regarded as ritually impure, such as any involving leather work, butchering, or removal of rubbish, animal carcasses, and waste. Dalits worked as manual labourers cleaning streets, latrines, and sewers. Engaging in these activities was considered to be polluting to the individual, and this pollution was considered contagious, As a result, Dalits were commonly segregated, and banned from full participation in Hindu Social life. For example, they could not enter a temple nor a school, and were required to stay outside the village.

Elaborate precautions were sometimes observed to prevent incidental contact between Dalits and other castes. Discrimination against Dalits still exits in rural area in the private sphere, in everyday matters such as access to eating places, schools, temples and water sources. It has largely disappeared in urban areas and in the public sphere. Some Dalits have successfully integrated into urban

Indian society, where caste origins are less obvious and less important in public life. In rural India, however, caste origins are more readily apparent and Dalits often remain excluded from local religious life. Though some qualitative evidence suggests that its severity is fast diminishing.

ECONOMIC STATUS OF DALITS

Not only are Dalits extremely poor (almost half of them living below the poverty line as compared to less than one-third of the rest of the population). But they are also almost totally dependent upon the dominant castes for their livelihoods as agricultural or urban labour. Thus many Dalits have sought greater economic dependence, both as an end in itself and as a means to other ends (E.g. Political power, educational opportunity). During the past decade a good number of international development agencies, both religious and secular, have also adopted economic strategy by funding a variety of grassroots Dalit organizations engaged in a range of community development activities. These activities focus on such things as small scale industries, teaching new skills, educating Dalits on how to take advantage of government development assistance, developing co-operatives. The task is enormous over 75% of the Dalit population is still rural and so these activities have to be carried out village by village. They also face opposition within each village from members of the dominant castes who want to keep Dalits as an impoverished and dependent source of cheap labour.

MODERN INDIA

Since 1950, India has enacted and implemented many laws and social initiatives to protect and improve the socio-economic conditions. Of its Dalit population.

By 1995, of all jobs in India, 17.02% of the jobs were held by Dalits, greater than their proportion in Indian population of the highest paying, senior most jobs in government agencies and government controlled enterprises. Over 10% of all highest paying jobs were held by members of the Dalit community, a tenfold increase in 40 years. In 1997, India democratically elected K. R. Narayanan, a Dalit, as the nation's president. In last 15 years, Indians born in historically discriminated minority castes have been elected to its highest judicial and political offices. The quality of life of Dalit population in India in 2001, in terms of metrics such as access to health care, life expectancy, education attainability, access to drinking water, housing, etc. was statistically similar to overall population of modern India.

Thus, Hindu texts do not mention the presence or discrimination of a Dalit caste, indicating that Dalit discrimination arose in society due to the corruption of religious practices by social hierarchy.

Statistics of the Dalits in India

- 200 million estimated Dalits in India
- 17% of the Indian population
- 110,000/- registered so many violence's against Dalits in 2005
- 38% of Indian state schools make Dalits sit separately when eating
- 36% of rural Dalits live below the poverty line
- 38% of urban Dlaits live below the poverty line.

Sources: UN, Human Rights Watch, Times Database (Dalits situation in India)

Varasanadu

Even A Brief Study Reveals The Following Truth About India

- 1 crime is committed against a Dalit every 18 minutes.
- 27 atrocities against Dalit every week.
- 13 Dalits are murdered every week.
- 5 Dalits homes or possessions are burnt every week.
- 6 Dalits are kidnapped or abducted every week.

Conclusion:

In ancient days and modern days Dalits are facing many problems like poverty, economic status, social status, lack of education and suppression or discrimination from the upper classes. So many crimes or violence or struggles and tortures face the Dalits in every day of their miserable lives. Now a days also Dalits faces the many problems and many more crimes against the Dalits this has proved the above statistical data.

2

Cultural Evolution of Dalit Literature in Karnataka

—Shivamallappa M

Literature is one facet of culture. The significance of a literature can be best understood in terms of the culture from which it springs, and the purpose of literature is clear only when the reader understands and accepts the culture on which the literature is based. Culture, being a main source of literature, influences many writers and thinkers. There is close relationship between culture and literature. The literature of each and every language is divided into many blocks according to their culture. Even its evolution and revolution depends upon the cultural evolution of that particular region.

Human life is incomplete and impossible without cultural identity, which is the essence of human dignity. In the past people lived together in community. They had genuine feeling of love, caring, sharing and co-operation towards their fellow beings. Their life was also influenced by the natural factors like blowing wind, flowing water, songs of birds, voice of animals and other natural phenomena. Thus, they developed the use of a combination of various sounds to signify different things. In a course of time, this could have led to the evolution of language and music. During this period consciously or unconsciously, a life style and culture evolved in ways that were unique to each little community.

Gradually, with the passage of time caste

and the skills became the profession and monopoly of certain communities. For instance the Brahmins as teachers, Kshyatrias as warriors, Vaishyas as traders and Shudras as servants. There was of course another set of people who were not even designated within the Varna structure and they were the Avarnas. Under the hegemony of Brahmins and other upper caste Hindus, the Avarnas and Shudras were obliged to them in every aspect. They worked hard in the fields of the upper caste, illams (bungalows) and served the high caste without getting anything in return or with very little and unjust remuneration. This had deep effects on their whole life and culture. Their strumming and drumming depended upon the mercy of the upper caste. In other words their cultural rights were governed by the will and whims of the Brahmins and they performed accordingly during festivals, ceremonies, rituals and other celebrations of the upper caste. Also this was the period when religious input from the Hindu mythology entered into these art forms.

Traditional communities performing Ramayana and Mahabharata are some of the ultimate results of this age. The domination of a particular caste had influenced the values and diverted the culture and art forms of the indigenous communities from its origins. Consequently the cultural and art forms of the traditional communities became the culture of the oppressed and outcastes.

The direction of literature has been changed a lot with the changing culture of the world in general, a language in particular. Ex: English literature has divided into several blocks like; old English literature, medieval English literature, modern, post modern etc. considering the culture of that particular age. So as dalit literature in India.

The source and the inspiration for dalit writers was undoubtedly the literature produced by the inimitable Dr. B.R.Ambedkar, noted as the chief architect of Indian constitution and pioneer of dalit movement in India. From

being social scientist to political thinker, a philosopher to educationist, a committed philanthropist, he continues to influence the dalit writing even to this day.

Dalit movement is a struggle that tries to counter attack the socio – cultural hegemony of the upper castes. It is a movement of the masses that craves for justice through the speeches, literary works, dramas, songs, cultural organizations and all the other possible measurers.

1970s witnessed a great deal of dalit movement, literature, activities throughout the country in almost all major languages. The word 'dalit' was first used in maharastra to emulate the movement heralded in the United States of America for emancipation of blacks as 'black panthers'. On similar lines 'Dalit panthers'was founded in maharastra in the later part of 1960s which eventually paved way for dalit literature in Marathi. The word dalit caught up with popular mood and the movements and literature in other languages unhesitatingly named them as dalit.

Arjum Dangle, a Marathi writer, gives a harrowing picture of dalits in a poem entitled 'Chhavni Hilti Ha', ('The Cantonment Has Begun to Shake').

"We fought with crows,
Never even giving them the snot from our noses.
As we dragged out the Upper Lane's dead cattle,
Skinned it neatly
And shared the meat among ourselves,
They used to love us then.
We warred with jackals--dogs--vultures--kites
Because we ate their share."

When looked into the scenario of kannada and Karnataka, the literature and the movement are just not borrowed from other parts, but have a strong foothold for provincial and indigenous reasons. Dalit literature became a form of literature in kannada as the cultural and social scenario has changed gradually.

Dalit literary movement in Karnataka has a long history which ideally unfolds the secret struggle against casteist tradition. It goes back to 11th century, to the first vachana poet, Madara Chennaiah who was a cobbler. The first ever Dalit Writer was from Karnataka. Madara Chennaiah(12th Centuary), Dohara Kakkaiah were the earliest known. In the 12th century the dalit poet, Kalavve challenged the upper castes in the following words

"Those who eat goats, foul and tiny fish:

Such, they call caste people.

Those who eat the sacred cow

That showers frothing milk for Shiva:

Such, they call out-castes.

Another vachana poet Basavanna raised his voice against caste discrimination in the northern part of Karnataka state. This social reform movement led by Basvanna in 12th century A.D. gave rise to a new kind of writing in Kannada literature. It is named as "Vachana Sahitya". But after this revolution, no remarkable changes had taken place till the birth of Dr. B R Ambedkar.

The birth of Dr.B.R.Ambedkar became sun rise for dalits. The concept of equality would have not been arisen if Ambedker has not born. The life and culture of Dalit took anew dimention with the labour of Ambedkar. The writings of Ambedkar and Jyothi Baphule made the Dalit to think about the existence of their own culture.

Later at the end of 20th Century (1970) Prof. B. Krishnappa, Dr. Siddalingiah, Devanooru Mahadeva, Deviah Harave, Prof. Aravinda Malagatthi, Prof. M. N. Javaraiah, Prof.Govindaiah, Prof. Chenanna Valikar, Sathyaanada Patrota, V. Munivenkatappa, Mulluru Nagaraja and Mogalli Ganesha paved way for the enrichment of Kannada Dalith Literature.

Prof. B. Krishnappa established 'Dalitha Sangharsha Committee' in Bhadravathi which was the soul charter for the DSS (Dalith Sangharsh Samithi) branching out to various organisations and movements for the oppressed. The discrimination of the dalits created a heart wrenching episodes of Poetic Literature which reflected the oppressed class in the society.

Another significant event was in March 1979, where Kannada Sahitya Parishad held its annual conference. The dalit writers demanded a separate session for discussing dalit literature which was outrightly denied by the organizers. Then the Dalit & Sudra writers joined hands to form 'Bandaya literary movement' meaning protest literature. Bandaya produced a plethora of literature mostly from those castes and communities who had no literary hierarchy. They were writing for the first time. The content and the dialect were new and fresh to the readers. After some time, a difference arose among dalit and Sudra writers resulting in an unfortunate split in the organization. Then it was rechristened as dalit-Bandaya literature. Now the identity of dalit literature is unique in Kannada.

It is interesting to note that the literary movement that started in the early 1970s continues to exist till today, of course with refinement and noticeable differences at the mark of every ten years. The early writers looked raw and rugged in their expression but the later ones carefully chiseled and fine-tuned their works of art before print (not without exceptions), may be, because they had the past and knew history. A noted (dalitised) critic Dr. D.R.Nagaraj once said in 1990 that the period of any literary movement is 15 years and after the period a new movement will emerge. Hoping so, the prominent writers of Kannada like P. Lankesh, U.R. Ananthamurthy, K.R.Nagaraj and a host of others, bugled a new theme under the caption 'Jagruta Sahitya Sammelana' but it did not take off beyond the first conference.

Now to throw some light on dalit writings: Devanooru Mahadeva and Siddalingaiah are considered to be the pioneers of dalit literature. Devanooru still commands reverence despite the miniscule dalit literature he has produced (157 pages in all), as its quality reigns supreme even to this day. He not only told the story of dalits in his own dialect but changed the idiom of storytelling. The critics were puzzled to receive him but continued to adore him. His narratives were the flames burning inside hapless selves languishing in pain and penury, told in native metaphors.

Siddalingaiah set a new trend in poetry, a norm of course, unthinkable by others, but he could not sustain the flow, may be because of overbearing imitations that followed. Nor could he experiment with new idiom. His contemporaries like M.N.Javaraiah, Chennanna Valikara, Mulluru Nagaraj, B.T.Lalitha Naik, Geetha Nagabhushana, Munivenkatappa and others practiced literature for a longer time and their contributions are acknowledged as greater.

The next generation writer like Aravind Malagatti, Sarjoo Katkar, Mudnakudu Chinnaswamy, K.B.Siddaiah, Sukanya Maruthi, Mallika Ganti, L. Hanumanthaiah, Mogalli Ganesh and others picked up their own idiom and even now they continue to enthrall the literary audience. They traversed through the dalit milieu and the stigmatized lives of individual selves and brought out the untold misery to the fore. Their works have been widely acclaimed and translations of their works in other languages are well received.

The third generation appears to be more sensitive to academic discipline and is catching the eyes of readers. N.K. Hanumanthaiah, Subbu Holeyar, Lakkur C. Anand, V.M.Manjunath, T.Yellappa D. Sarswathi, Anasuya Kamble are the prominent names. Although poetry and short stories are the rich haul of these writers, a few have tried

novels but the magnum opus is yet to arrive. There are also autobiographies and plays worth mentioning.

Dalit Bandaya movement is significant because it encompassed much more severely affected sections of people like Muslims and women. It gave way for them to express the injustice they suffered within. The contributions of Boluvaru Mohamed Kunyi, Sara Abubakar, Banu Mastak and others are unique.

Dalit literature is special than other literature because the Dalits who lived out of villages able to preserve their rich culture. It is not contaminated or altered by mingling with other cultures. Such culture gets expressed of it's custom, belief in its adaptability of language. Dalit writers are using different kind of language than that of the language used in earlier times in literature. They use the language which is known to them and considered rustic by the previous writers. Dalit writers are interested to portray their peoples past. So they follow the language of their own people and their dialect, without refining it. Therefore it gets a special attention in Kannada literature. For Example, the language used by Devanoor Mahadeva in *Odalala and Kusumabale*, it is so colloquial and different from written language of the city people. This kind of language,could only express the real feelings and intensity of the writer. The reader and the people then only can identify the "Dalitatwa" or "Dalitness" in Dalit literature. Dalit feelings come from Dalit language only. No other language could express it exactly. So Dalit feelings + Dalit language = Dalit culture.

The language looks totally different from the other existing languages, style, presentation, subject matter etc. The another feature of Dalit literature is, it tries to compare the past situation of Dalits to the present and future generation not because to create hatredness in Dalits towards upper castes. But to make them aware of their pitiable condition, and to show them a way to channel their struggle against the oppressors.

It was Dalit movement which made everyone in the society to look towards the last man of the social hierarchy of the caste system. Before Dalit literature, the literature which existed earlier, concentrated only on one class of people and it gave lesser importance for the subjects concerning the Dalits. So without Dalits as a subject the past works may be regarded as a partial literature because of its failure to concentrate on the last human being who lived contemporary life. Dalit literature is rare and rich literature, its variety was available through the writings of new writers. Its importance is rightly putforth by eminent writer Devanoor Mahadeva: If handful of depiction of Dalit world in my stories could change the direction of Kannada literature, it in unimaginable to think what change may happen if every man of this dark continent speaks. Dalit literature came out by the educated Dalits, and it successfully reached uneducated Dalits also, through folk songs and simplicity of language.

When the suppressed people raise their voices against the suppressors, after being suppressed for centuries, it effected on the culture of the suppressed one. The age old Indian concept of 'Indian culture' means 'Hindu culture' has changed after new kind of culture like dalit culture emerged.

The thoughts of Dr.B.R.Ambedkar and Periyar are noticeable in this movement. In Karnataka Dr.Nagaraja's "Samskrithi matthu vismrithi", Baraguru Ramachandrappa's "Upa Samskrithi", Harihara Priya's "Paryaya Samskrithi" are important. The writings of these writers made the mono-culture into multi-culture.

If these writers made the Dalits, to know about the existence of their culture. The later ones concentrated on the evolution of their culture through literature. Rahmat Tarikere, D.R.Nagaraj are recogniged well in this stream. Rahamath Tarikere put himself into conflict with the existing culture. He totally rejects the existing culture. He says:

> "Culturalization means de-mythologizing, and rationally elucidating the culture of those who have ruled us and witnessing their destruction. After the destruction of the bad one we have the responsibility to construct new one. Because, there is no value for destruction, unless we have the ability to re-construct it."

There may be a lot of disturbances while constructing this new culture. But, if we resolute to do it, a new culture will emerge.

During the age of Navodaya(renaissance) feudal system was existed. No Dalit owned a piece of land in this age. The characters played the role of Dalit in Shivarama Karanta's Chomana Dudi, Kuvempu'S Malegalalli Madumagalu, Rao Bahuddur's Gramayana, Goruru Ramaswamy Iangar's Hemavathi have no land. If Chomana Dudi express an hatredness towards the landless Dalit's, a kind of sympathy was shown towards them in Hemavathi. Ananda Perumal express his concern towards Dalits as:

> "He is labouring us from many generations,
>
> we are just enjoying the fruit of his labour that's all"

Even though Ananda Perumal thought so for a moment, there no use for Dalits out of this sympathy. One can easily understand that, he is acting.

The Dalits of progressive (pragatisheela) novels had owned some land.But still they mortgage this land to the upper caste people. In the novel of Basavaraja Kattimani, some Dalits, even though they had some pieces of land they could not own it since the government itself in favour of the village head, who belongs to upper caste.

We can notice a slight difference between Navodaya and Pragatisheela age. A minor change has taken place in their condition. Another novel "Harijanayana" of Basavaraja Kattimani marked that Dalits started to get some opportunities for their cultural development in this

age. But the Dalits who have got such opportunities became selfish and never tried to uplift their people.

There is even a picture of conversion into other religions in these two ages. Guruva, the son of Choma converted into Christianity after being got an assurance of getting a piece of land by local Christian church. Even his father Choma also thought of Converting into Christianity at some moment. In another well known novel of kuvempu's "Malegalalli Madumagalu", Jeevarathnayya tries to convert Dyavayya Gowda and Baccha of dalit into Christianity.

The novels "Dambana Nayi" of Janardhana Gurka and "Nee nanna mutta beda" of Basavaraja Kattimani depict how the fathers of Christian churches try to convert. "Kala", a dalit character in "Nee nanna mutta beda" has been advised by church father Maridasa as:

"You are an intelligent boy,

We send you to mission high school

You can study up to Ph.D.

Even we find you a European bride"

But later he left this idea as his father strongly opposed the conversion.

The dalits looked innocent and helpless during renaissance (Navodaya). But in the later periods of modern (Navya) and Progressive (Pragathisheela), they tried for some change. They tried to become educated, which is the first step of culturalization. But the people of upper caste never ready to agree this. Even though the British tried to make these people educated, the Indian orthodox mind could not tolerate it. This has been highlighted in the novel "Nee nanna muttabeda" of Basavaraja Kattimani. The first word asked to Mahadeva who belonged to Dalit is "Are you a dalit (holeya). When he said "yes", the teacher asked him to sit in a corner, where brooms and slippers are kept.

Dalit and Bandaya literature emerged after progressive (Navodaya) literature. One can observe a drastic change in dalit's life and culture during this age. The literary works of these two ages marked the social, economic and cultural development of dalits. In the novel Holeyara Rajakumara of Shivarudrappa kallolikar, Januba, a dalit character, achieve economic stability by selling milk. He became a model for all dalits of village.

The bandaya literature talks about the protest of dalits against the in-equality. We can see a strong protest against the rules and rituals of the upper caste people in the novel "Ondu Urina Kathe" of Baraguru Ramachandrappa. When Ramu, a dalit sits beside the upper caste people, during a discourse, they insist him to sit a far. Ramu replied.

"You people always advise me

You only have the power to sit on the platform

We are not looking as human beings in your eyes

You would have allowed us to sit there, if you

Treated us as human beings

We would have had a position, if you treated us as human beings

We are cattles, pigs, sheep."

Natural environment and traditional values of dalits are being hammered in the name of progress and development. Any system, which allows greed to grow and selfishness to spread is a severe threat to human existence. This growing trend, on the other hand, had badly influenced dalits life and culture. Eventually, a new culture of westernization and modernization has emerged within the last few decades breaking the community life and cultural identity of masses. The word "change" or "progress" in literature and culture reminds us the writers, who make reach the change to common people. If person became a writer means, he stands beyond illiteracy and

ignorance. When he starts his journey of writing, almost he is subjected to culturalization. For this culturalized person their natural environment and traditional values may seems senseless. This kind of evolution is a great threat to the original culture.

Globalization, privatization, industrialization and education brought two kinds of changes in dalit life culture and literature. One is, in this process, they may lose their original culture. Another one is, it is creating a big gap between the educated and un-educated dalits. This gap became a problem for a writer. In this era of computer, not only a writer under gone a change, but also the cultural aspects. The cultural aspects like language, profession, food habit, clothing, social system, economic condition and practices of dalits are undergone a drastic change. Even though he doesn't want to change, it became inevitable for him. Even though we say the culturalization is a threat it doesn't mean we are against the development and improvisation of dalits. Our concern is that the culturization should not adversely affect on a cult or a community.

Most of the dalit writers, after being affected by modern culture have lost their sharpness in their writing. The later works of some well known writers have lost the sanctum of their language and experience which we could amply seen in their earlier works. For example, there is no such kind of sharpness in B T Lalitha Naik's "Nele Bele" as we can see in her earlier novel "Gathi". On the other hand Devanuru Mahadeva, who still live in a village set-up, has not affected by the so called culturalization. So even today also a reader can feel a sharpness, original experience and sanctity of language in his writings.

The contribution of Dalit literature in Karnataka to the field of Kannada literature is less in size, if it compared with Marathi Dalit literature. But it has clearly depicted the pangs of Dalits to the external world which they had been tolerating since centuries together.

Dalit literature is an emerging literature. It has found its own voice. Their stories told in Marathi, Tamil, Hindi and Kannada and Telugu are now being translated into English, French and Spanish. The Dalit writers no longer depend on empathy of non dalits to tell the world, their own story. In fact Dalit writing seems to be getting on the list of every major publisher in India. Dalits are developing with the help of globalization, with the help of computer and internet, they are ready to establish their relationships with the Afro – American and African writers. As the features of these literatures are also one and the same.

Dalit literature is slowly emerging as a discipline of academic study as well. The Department of studies in English at the University of Pune, features Dalit and Afro-American literature in a course entitled "Literature of protest". Even in the University of Mysore The Department of studies in English prescribed "Dalit literature" for the P.G.course as one of the optional papers. And also in "Central institute of English and Foreign Language", at Hyderabad and U.S. Universities offering„ South Asian Studies are thinking also positively about Dalit issues. Thus Dalit literature has found a place in academic and public reading. It is attracting both educated Dalits and non Dalit readers. It has shown the signs of growing still better. Because, the writings made by Dalit writers so far are the writings of first generation of educated Dalits. As the number of educated Dalits increases in the future years, the Dalit community has the hopes of producing even better works both in quality and quantity.

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3

Societal Framework: A Limited Sphere for Dalits.

–Usha Devi

The 'untouchable' portrayed as an object, submissive and pitiful, resigned to the malice\ of caste and destiny. The lacuna in the Indian literary philosophy and culture caused by the caste specific bias is rectified by the writings of the Dalits themselves, and it is primarily to this end that the efforts of the Dalit writers are directed. They have challenged the hegemonic conventions and value systems that inscribe the former 'untouchables' within the circle of the upper caste discourse and in the process have created a body of literature that is essentially identified by a parlance of productive protest for the purpose of provoking a critical re-examination of the authoritarian and unequal caste hierarchies in the society. Dalit literature poses a major challenge to the dominant episteme by its own and by extension, of others' socio-cultural and political reality. It also seeks to revise traditional Indian aesthetics and literary theories by introducing into the mainstream literary culture the creativity and the inventiveness of a hitherto marginalized subculture and literature. It is essential to comprehend the gradual evolution and the definition of the term 'Dalit' before one advances to any discussion of Dalit literature. The term Dalit is used today as a thoroughly radical grouping of that segment of Indian society that is socially, culturally and physically subjugated, its subjugation a result of a state of ritual pollution commonly called "untouchability". Untouchability finds endorsement

from the textual culture of Brahminical India that still perpetuates itself in the contemporary Society. However, many Dalit Social thinkers and writers like Limbale have strategically chosen to broaden the reach of the term to include various others. The term is used by Limbale in his text: tawards and Aesthetics of Dalit literature: History, controversies and considerations.

Subaltern sections of the society like women, religious minorities and the working class. The Dalit panthers too, in their manifesto, defined Dalit as:

> "Members of SC and ST, neo-Buddhist, working people,
>
> Landless and poor peasants, women and all those who are
>
> Exploited politically, economically and in the name of religion".

However, this argument is more tactical then sustainable. Dalit is a term that is today more accurately applicable to those sections of the Indian society whose liminality is a result of a caste-based hierarchical order that inscribes them as perennially polluted and thus untouchable. It is improper to incorporate here those whose exclusion from the centers' of power and privilege is due to other forces of oppression and exclusion like modernity, gender or economics.

Dalit and women's autobiographies display a tremendous skepticism to words this valorization of the individual self at the expense of the community, as canonical orthodoxy has presented the social category of upper class caste men as the only fitting subject for self-hood. much of which are ideologically endorsed by the philosophy of metaphysical selfhood.

Dalit women have frequently been called 'thrice Dalits' as they are exploited by the forces of caste, class and gender. Women have to struggle more than the men in their families to study and develop a career.

Akkarmashi describes in detail the exploitation of Dalit women by the 'upper' castes as well as by the Dalits themselves.

As a young, unmarried girl, Baisantri too faces sexual threats from several quarters, including a highly renowned and much respected leader of the Dalit community who worked in close association with Ambedkar. Limbale states that every village patil had a Dalit woman as a mistress, and that beauty is a curse for the women of the community. He also mentions the existence of the practice of devoting daughters as temple dancers in the Dalit society that sexually exploit women in the name of religion. Interestingly, Akkarmashi, among all other autobiographies by men in this study, is most sympathetic to and aware of the problems facing women as a result of gender inequality. This is perhaps so because Limbale, as an illegitimate child, violates one of the most sacrosanct values of patriarchy, the sexual 'purity' of women. As the mistress of the village patil, Masamai's (Limbale's mother) sexuality transgresses the domestic space, and the children born are thus 'outcastes'. Limbale, as a man who challenges patriarchy by the virtue of the very conditions of his birth, is ideally situated to demystify the agents of sexism that victimize women. He too has an ambivalent relationship with his community: while, as a man, he is allowed to pursue educational and professional career without any ado on the part of the community, yet his illegitimacy disrupts his smooth integration with his society. Limbale has to bear the barbs of the social insult each time the endorsement of the father's name is required for official purposes.

In Akkarmashi, Limbale declares of his sister Nagi that she was a born thief who would steal food from the stalls in the market. Then he goes on to defend her actions by stating that one is not born a thief, but is driven to it by poverty and discriminatory social structures that safeguard the crook and punish the deprived. He also informs the reader of a relative of his who would steal poultry from unsuspecting farmers and poultry owners, or even resort to poisoning animals for their meat on the unavailability of food. Thieving becomes the weapon of the subaltern for

survival, and not an example of the moral depravity of the much maligned Dalit culture.

Oscar Lewis has described minimal or restricted participation in the primary institutions of the society as a condition of marginality, and even a cursory survey of Dalit autobiographies reveal that most Dalits have an extremely limited role to play either in the development of, or in the utilization of the social structures.

The Dalit autobiographies also challenge the mainstream assumption that caste is no longer a valid force in the modern Indian society, as it has been rendered insignificant due to the various social and legal measures adopted by the successive governments since independence.

Limbale's autobiography ends by reiterating what he has tried to present as the over whelming experience of his and his community's life their status as outcastes. 'outcaste' becomes a metaphor for the numerous kinds of exclusions that disrupt an individual's harmonious integration with the society, and Limbale's continual omission from the social privileges is powerfully reflected in the name that he gives to his new born son. He chooses to call his son Anaarya, which means lowborn and of mean social stature. Hence, it is possible to read this gesture as a rebellion against the hegemonic value system by a celebration and assertion of one's difference, the name remains a potent symbol of liminality and dispossession. Dalit autobiographies have an advantage over fiction and poetry in the sense that one should have lived the life of a Dalit to represent it through the medium of discourse. However, several Dalit critics have extended this argument to include the entire body of Dalit literature, and have asked for the whole-sale exclusion of Dalit centered writings of non-Dalit authors from the body of Dalit literature. Dalit literature is necessarily a literature of revolt and in alienable from a commitment to a structural transformation of the society. Dalit literature, like the Dalits themselves, is a part, and yet apart from

the establishment. In order to preserve its radicalism, it must resist the temptation of endorsing totalizing practices like essentialism and normative identities.

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4

Dalit Discourse: Experience and Literary Encounters

—Dr. Bhujendra Singh Rathod.LR

The human history began with the endless struggle between the two opposing forces: that is between the exploiters and the exploited, the rulers and the ruled, the powerful and the powerless, the oppressors and the oppressed and between the colonizers and the colonized. In any human situation the great forces of oppression and humiliation can be seen by the power full or dominant group always functioning dynamically on weaker sections throughout the history of humankind. Moreover the powerful group attempts to control and exploit the less powerful group by using all its resources in order to further and safeguard its own interests. According to Frantz Fanon, the class of oppressors is invariably inimical to the autonomy of the oppressed and their culture. Therefore, it constantly attempts to inculcate a sense of inferiority complex or inferiority of their indigenous culture by obliterating their cultural past. This resulting sense of inferiority is internalized in their collective memory and their instinctive behavioral responses.

The introduction of the Hindu verna or cast system, Dilits have been isolated from the rest of the community through the inhuman and unreasonable practice of untouchability. Dalits have been commonly addressed and criticized as Shudras in common parlance. In India these categorized people have always been at the lowest rung of the Indian social ladder, as they are the most unfortunate

members of the human community the empirical evidence of the historical past reveals that the hegemonic and political aspirations of higher caste sought their marginalization humiliation and isolation from the mainstream of life. They were thrown beyond the margins of social, cultural, political and economic spheres of life in all sense. The tragic sense of misery, suffering and the consequent sense of alienation has their genesis in primordial instincts in the powerful to dominate and crush the weak and establish their hegemony of all kinds. Therefore, the caste system and the cultural productions such as religion, philosophy, literature and fine arts were fully exploited for perpetuation of an extremely inhuman and unnatural way of life to heap injustice upon Dalits and label them as ugly, subhuman, inferior and sinful.

It is relevant to explore the causes and rationale that were used to justify the practice and prevalence of untouchability in the ancient Hindu social system that was responsible for ageless and endless pain and sufferings of Dalits. The four Varnas based on various occupations were at the centre of the Hindu social structure. The Hindu scriptures advocate specific occupation for each caste. Thus, the class Brahmins (priests) was assigned the vocation of performing religious activities. The class of Kshatrias (warriors) was entrusted with the job of protecting the society from the forces of invasion or aggression. The class of Vaishyas (traders) was supposed to undertake economic activities. The class of Shudras (labourers) was required to do the slavery kind of work. In that rigid and orthodox social structures the Shudras were deliberately and permanently pushed to the margins by the higher castes and deprived them of any slightest possibility of upward mobility. Therefore the classic Brahminical world view excluded the Shudras from the scheme of things and formulated, theorized and justified their assumptions of an invariant social order that had a divine sanction of the Lord Brahma.

The classification and positions of these four vanas were strictly in accordance with their birth, utility and excellence in their religious sacrificial function. It was claimed that in the hierarchical position of birth, the Brahmins were the first to be born. They were prioritized over the rest due to their excellence at performing rites and rituals at the time of sacrificial ceremony. The rigid social structure did not allow the members to swap their duties and functions. The strict adherence to the duties of one's class was considered good. The Shudras were prohibited from performing the functions of the higher castes. They were commanded to perform ugly and menial kind of job of scavenging and tanning. They were not allowed to imitate and undertake respectable duties of the caste of Brahmins. The theological interpretation of the ancient Hindu world view justified the desirability and utility of this kind of social structure as it sought legitimacy from the religion and its ancient scriptures. All those scriptures and their interpreters recommended absolute faith in them and in the interpretation that the Varna or the caste system was willed by God or it was one of divine creation. Therefore, a strict conformity to the prescribed way of life was emphasized and ensured by the class or caste of priests. It is due to this discriminatory and biased social hierarchy, the ruling class and the class of priests worked hand - in-hand and subjected all the Shudras to an inferior social status.

The state power and the organized religion imposed on them social, cultural and mental restrictions through superstitions, myths and corporal punishments. Because of the inferior, ugly and unhealthy nature of their work, their physical contact was strictly avoided. Even their shadow was considered as an evil and polluting force by the higher castes.

The ancient text of *Manu Smruti* was often used for the justification of the exploitation of lower caste people in

India. It recommends an extremely rigid and prohibitory code of conduct for the untouchables often called as chandalas. This brought about stagnation in social, political and economic spheres of life. In the tenth chapter of the *Manu Smruti* Manu writes that the chandalas or untouchables must not be allowed within the limits of the village. They should be forced to live outside the precincts of the village. They should not posses valuable assets but only broken pots. They should posses donkeys and dogs as their only wealth. They should wear the garments of the dead people. They should use broken mud pots and other utensils and eat their food from the broken dishes. Their ornaments should be made of black iron and they must wander from place to place.

This expulsion of the untouchables from the centre of the social life of the village to its periphery deprived them of their dignity and self respect. Their peripheral and 'Othered' existence was surrounded by helplessness, ugliness, squalor, ignorance and poverty. The high castes assigned unpleasant menial and unrewarding tasks such as scavenging carrying and disposing of the dead bodies. They were also required to act as hangmen. Any deviation from these prescribed duties entailed terrible physical punishments for them. In return for their services the untouchables were favored with the stale food and the leftovers. The most disgusting inhuman and cruel example of social injustice was the practice of forcing them to tie an earthen pot around their neck and a broom at the back in order to save the village roads from getting defiled and polluted through their infectious sputum and foot-prints. To cap it all, even the potable water was not easily accessible to them as they had to depend upon the mercy of the higher castes to favour them with the drinking water.

The years of misery, poverty, ignorance, slavish mind-set and economic dependence gradually eliminated a desire for any kind of freedom from the collective consciousness

of untouchables. It was due to the repressive socio-cultural state apparatus, their self respect or identity was replaced by self hatred. Their consciousness was colonized by the socio- political and socio- cultural discourse which conditioned their minds as passive receivers and slaves of the system. As a result of this conditioning they began to look at themselves as the high caste people would do, and in the course of time they lost sense of their "Self" and will to fight. It would be pertinent here to refer to the 19th century European view of the Indian caste system as recorded by a French missionary known as Abbey DuBois. In his book entitled, "Hindu Manners, Customs and Ceremonies," DuBois presents an account of life in the early 19th century society in India. He has attempted to show the contrasting life styles of the pariahs (the untouchables in Tamil) and that of the high caste Hindus.

The historiographers find it difficult to locate genesis of the concept of caste and untouchability in temporal and spatial terms in the historical antiquity of India's' past as there is not much factual and archival record of socio-cultural correspondences lost during various invasions and incursions into India around the 10th century. The archeological and sociological sources are hardly adequate to address the problem.

Though political and economic clout was responsible for a prestigious social and religious standing of a community member, yet the system had an inherent lacunae that did not allow a well to-do untouchable to aspire for a high ritual position and nor could a poor Brahmin was forced to occupy a lower ritual position in the hierarchy. In the Indian socio- cultural structure castes are invariant and timeless categories in the sense that castes are determinants of one's position in the hierarchy. Even today, a person's birth into a particular caste-fold prevents him from marrying over to the caste of his choice or from marrying a spouse from another caste. These caste stereotypes were accorded

religious sanction through Hinduism. The Hinduism emphasizes that one's actions in the present life determine his or her status and happiness in the next life. This kind of postulation strengthened the existing stereotypes and spared little scope for polarization. As a result of this, Hinduism tended to become a monolithic ideology of life. Its belief in the rebirth and next life made it abstract and other worldly. This provided higher castes with an excuse to perpetuate social discrimination to further their own interests at the cost of the untouchables.

According to scholars and historiographers the Varna or caste system with its invariant hierarchical caste categories had its genesis around 300 B.C.It is believed that during this period the scriptures or religious texts like *Upnishadas, Puranas* and *Pursh Sukta* were written. These books contained a powerful religio-philosophical discourse that had a considerable impact on the contemporary civilization. During the age of Manu and the priest Yadnyawalkya these scriptures exercised great influence as an authentic rendering of socio- cultural and religious philosophy of life.

A number of theoretical assumptions and explanations have been offered by the historians, researchers and scholars about the origin and development of the concept of untouchability. However, Dr. Ambedkar's hypothesis appears quite convincing, plausible and pertinent. He himself was an untouchable. His objective interpretation and scholarly insights on this subject are found in his seminal book *The Untouchable* which offers his theory about the tribesmen and the broken men from the alien tribes.

The Middle Age witnessed emergence of an array of religious cults propagating their respective principles aimed at reformation in the Hindu social set-up. Those religious sects attempted to propose a simplistic form of Hindu religious beliefs and practices. During the period

between the 11th and 12th centuries there emerged the cults such as Mahanubhav and Warkari. These two cults had a considerable influence and following in the contemporary society. Around this time there was the emergence of the Nath cult. It was very popular and had many followers. The Mahanubhav cult attempted to offer an alternative set of beliefs and reduce the stranglehold of an orthodox belief system that had dominated that life since ancient times. The Mahanubhavis revolted against the practice of untouchability, caste and gender discrimination.

The pan-Indian Bhakti movement produced humanitarian religious discourse and its practitioner saints like Ramanuj Guru Nanak, Kabir, Basaveshwar and Mirabai and a few others in different regions of India. They denounced the inhuman practice of untouchability and appealed to the masses to do away with it. The orthodox Brahmnical priestly class isolated the common humanity from God through misleading interpretation of religion but the Warkari cult brought a new ray of hope for them. It rejected the orthodox rituals and recommended simple prayers to God to attain salvation in this life. It tried to liberate God from the clutches of the Brahminical priests. The Warkari cult convinced the masses that irrespective of one's caste and gender, god was accessible to any devout person or bhakt. It never bothered itself with a devotee's social, political and economic rank or status in society. Therefore, the slave women like Janabai and the prostitutes like Kanhopatra were welcomed to its fold. Sant Eknath's (from the Marathwada region) humanitarian act of lifting an untouchable child from the scorching heat of the desert is an important instance of philanthropic effect of the Warkari cult in the direction of the eradication of untouchability. Chokha Mela, the saint poet and the follower of the Warkari cult belonged to the untouchable community. He tried to raise the consciousness of people about the dark side of untouchability through his Abhangas

or devotional poetry addressed to God. He is often regarded as the precursor of Dalit poetry. While exposing hypocrisy of the society he asks people not to be taken in by the outward appearance of a person.

It is interesting to note here that all these saints never had a rational attitude towards the organized religion. They never challenged its highly unrealistic and orthodox assumptions such as the ancient Varna system and the inhuman practice of social discriminations sanctioned by it in spite of its humanitarian appeal and altruism, the Bhakti movement and its practice. They could not challenge the validity of the obnoxious practice of untouchability and other abstractions. They could not promote and popularize the notion of social equality, justice and other egalitarian ideas. Though religious and devotional literature produced by them attempted to strengthen the accepted

stereotypes through their belief in fatalism and the theories of Karma (action) and Dharma (duty), it, challenged the discriminatory religious rhetoric of the priestly classes. The saint literature provided much needed affirmation to the unnatural, brute and unjustifiable social practice of the upper classes.

The western colonialism with its forces of enlightenment brought a new wave of ideas to the Indian subcontinent. With the establishment of a British colony in 1818, the process of change and awakening was accelerated. It brought in its trail many social, political and economic ideas to India. The encounter with Christianity created many more possibilities of changes. The spread of Christianity through missionaries acquainted the Indians with the Christian theological thought. The British colonists introduced new knowledge, technology and effective methods of production that facilitated industrial progress.

After the establishment of the British colonial rule, the penal code was introduced in 1851. It exposed the

discrepancy and primitive nature of the Varna system. As a result of this the supremacy and authority of Brahmins was challenged. The new British rule encouraged the rural artisans, the untouchables and the poor provincial people to migrate to the urban commercial towns and cities and start professions of their choice in place of their traditional and caste-based occupations. With the inception of universities at Bombay, Calcutta and Madras in 1857, there was gradual growth in the number of educated men and women in India. It was due to print journalism there were a number of periodicals to cater to the needs of an ever growing reading public in India. The western liberal, secular, democratic thought influenced the Indian thinkers and social reformers. They realized that the orthodox and outdated religious, social ideas coupled with the lack of proper education were hampering the growth of the Indian society. They realized that the inhuman and unnatural social conventions such as untouchability, the practice of sati and numerous superstitions were responsible for the stagnation of their society. The social reformers like Raja Ram Mohan Roy began their fight against such cruel social conventions. They demanded their absolute elimination from the social sphere of life. The new rational ideas influenced reformers like Balshastri Jambhekar, Lokhitwadi, Justice Ranade and Mahatma Phule who started their struggle against orthodoxy and ignorance. In 1832 the first Marathi periodical 'Darpan' was started by Jambhekar in Mumbai. He began to propagate progressive ideas through this periodical. Gopal Hari Deshmukh alias Lokhitwadi tried to convince the Indians about the exploitative nature of the British imperial rule and promoted nativism. He asked people to boycott the British products and use the products produced by the native Indians.

Under the influence of liberal, progressive and secular ideas, the social reformers were inspired to establish a number of sabhas and societies such as Dnyan Prasarak Sabha, Royal Asiatic society, Paramhans Mandali, Bramho

Samaj, Arya Samaj, Prarthana Samaj etc. Justice M. G. Ranade was also a great thinker who inspired the middle class people to strive for social and economic progress. In the last decades of the 19th century the men like Gopal Ganesh Agarkar and Lokmanya Tilak struggled for social and political progress of people.

However, the contribution of Mahatma Phule to the social reforms was unprecedented and substantial. Mahatma Phule was a great visionary thinker and social reformer. He struggled hard for the upliftment of the Dalits, the underprivileged and women. His rational arguments created a new hope and awareness in the minds of the lower class people. He expounded his common sense approach to the social ills in his epoch-making books such as *Sarvjanik Satyadharma* (Public Religion and Truth), *Brahmanache Kasab* (Bramhin Skill), *Gulamgiri* (slavery) and *Shetkaryacha Asud* (the Farmer's Whip). These books are Phule's critique of Hindu religion and a scathing criticism of Brahminism. He established the Satya Shodhak Samaj (The Truth Seeking Society) in 1873 with a view to brining in a new social order based on the principle of justice, equality and reason.

Phule struggled hard to subvert the Brahminical discourse for perpetuation of a hierarchical social order. He criticized the British imperial and colonial rulers for their indifference to the welfare of the poverty stricken underprivileged masses and their anti- poor policies. As a part of his conscious strategy about untouchability, he established a school for women in 1851 and the first school for untouchables in 1852. He was the first philanthropic social reformer who made available the water tank from his house to the untouchables.

Phule played a crucial role in raising the consciousness of the downtrodden people and the untouchables. There were several factors that contributed to this process. Because of the British policies education was made available and

accessible to all, including the untouchables. The Christian missionaries helped the downtrodden people by their acts of charity such as free health services and equality with others. The well intentioned persons from the class of untouchables took initiative in starting the movement for defining their self identity. Gopalbaba Walangkar founded the Amarya Dosh Parihar Samaj in 1889 and wrote a book entitled *Vital Vidhvansan*. In 1818 Kisan Fagoo Bansode founded the Nirasrit Samaj. In 1903 Shivram Kamble organized a conference of untouchables.

It was through the great and ceaseless efforts of Phule and others in the last decades of the 19th century, there emerged a very powerful movement in the early part of the 20th century.

The far-sighted thinker, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar founded the People's Education society as he believed that education opens out new avenues and that the untouchables should have an access to them. It is significant that the Dalit literature owes its origin to a revolutionary struggle started by Dr. Ambedkar for a change in the social, cultural, literary and economic hegemony of the caste Hindus.

The basic impulse behind literature is an awareness of the social injustice and rebellion against it. Though, till nineteenth century, the untouchables were traditionally singers, jesters and drummers of the folk drama, 'Tamasha' happens to be the only recorded voice of the Dalit consciousness. Before that the Dalit consciousness, though subdued, was reflected in Saint Chokamela. Although, many of his poetic creations sing of Lord Vitthal, some do interrogate against the practice of untouchability.

The dominant figure in this period was Gopalbaba Walangkar who started a monthly *Vital Vidhwansan* in 1894. Shivram Kambale also started a monthly *Somvanshiya Mitra* through which the untouchable sensibilities were expressed. Waman Kardak, Pandit

Kondiram, Kerubuva Gaikwad and Kisan Fago Bansode contributed significantly with their poems and songs by deriding at the cruel practices of Hinduism, prescribed in *Manusmriti.*

It was Anna Bhau Sathe, who gave the first fully uninhabited expression to the Dalit consciousness in his writings. Prominently known as a Marxist writer he could not establish himself as the Dalit writer, may be because he joined Ambedkarite movement much later. His penchant for minute observation, deep compassion and understanding of the life of the downtrodden and his irresistible gift for creativity made his novels like *Fakira* and *Warnecha Wagh*, remarkable creations in Marathi literature.Shankarrao Kharat, another Marathi writer acquired eminence through the works, *Manuskichi Haak* and *Baḷutedar*. His autobiography *Taral Antaral* portrayed guileless and helpless condition of the Dalits in their novels and gave the Dalit a heroic position in literature for the first time.

However, Dalit life was also viably portrayed by some Savarna, (non Dalit) writers like V.S. Khandekar in Don Mane. S.M.Mate in Upekshitanche Antarang, G.T. Madkholkar in Chandanwadi and the poet Keshavsoot in his poem Antyajachya Mulacha Prashna. These works depict the sufferings and suppression of the Dalits. The upper-caste progressive critics and reviewers like M.B. Chitnis, S.B. Karhade, P.S. Nerurkar, W.L. Kulkarni, R.G. Jadhav, D.K. Bedekar and Sharadchandra Muktibodh upheld Dalit literature as a strong off-shoot enriching the mainstream Marathi literature. Dr. M. N. Wankhede, who was a Mahar from Amravati, encouraged most of the Dalit writers to verbalize their feelings candidly.

The poems by leading Dalits poets like Baburao Bagul, Keshav Meshram and Narayan Surve were published in different Magazines. The eminent writer Raja Dhale led

the movement for a few years. The movement flourished in the sixties and came to an end by the year1970. The publication of Baburao Bagul's collection of short stories, *Jevha Mi Jaat chorli Hoti* (when I had concealed my caste) gave a momentum to the Dalit movement because of the rebellious stance taken by the protagonists of the stories. Though not an avowed Dalit writer, Narayan Surve, who was influenced by Marxism gave a new dimension to the Dalit movement with two collections of poetry, *Aisa Ga Mi Brahma* (For I am Brahma) and *Majhe Vidyapeeth* (My University). Baburao Bagul's second volume of short stories, *Maran Svasta Hot Aahe* (Death is becoming cheaper) gave a jolt to mainstream Marathi Literature as it presents the heart rending experience of the author. In addition to the above mentioned writers, the following writers too contributed significantly to the Dalit Literature. They are Keshav Meshram, Avinash Dolas, Arjun Dangale, Bhimrao Shirwale, Tarachandra Khandekar, Yogiraj Waghmare and others. The complex, obliterated, curvilinear relationship between a Dalit individual and the society constitutes the theme of Dalit short stories.

Dalit novel could not enjoy outright growth compared to the Dalit poetry and short story. From the new generation, Madhav Kondvilkar (Ajum Ujadayacha Aahe), Bhimsen Dethe (Iskot) Ashok Whatkar (Melela Pani), B. Rangrao (Soma) and few others are conspicuous Dalit novelists. The period between 1972 to 1978 saw the proliferation of the Dalit literature through its poems, short stories, novels, periodicals etc. the period between 1978 to 1986 bestowed an accomplished dimension to the Dalit literature that of the autobiographies.

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A host of Dalit writers resorted to writing autobiographies. Among them *Baluta* (Village Servicemen) by Daya Pawar, *Upara* (The Alienated) by Laxman Mane, *Athavaninche Pakshi* (Birds of Reminisces) by P.E. Sonkamble and *Mukkampost Davache Gothane* (At Post Devache Gothane) have emerged as the landmarks in Marathi literature.

There were different experiments of the performance ranging from street-plays to the well equipped theatricals. *Manuskiche Band* (Revolt of Humanity) by Gangadhar Pantavane, *Mrutyupatra* (The will) by Suresh Vanjari, *Pinjaryatil Popat* (A Parrot in the cage) by Datta Bhagat, *Narbali* (Human sacrifice) by Kamalakar Datar, *Nata* (Relation) by Baburao Gaikwad are some of the notable plays.

The first ever Dalit Writer was from Karnataka. Madara Chennaiah(12th Centuary), Dohara Kakkaiah were the earliest known. Later at the end of 20th Century (1970) Prof. B. Krishnappa, Dr. Siddalingiah, Devanooru Mahadeva, Deviah Harave, Prof. Aravinda Malagatti, Prof. M. N. Javaraiah, Prof.Govindaiah, Prof. Chenanna Valikar, Sathyaanada Patrota, V. Munivenkatappa, Mulluru Nagaraja and Mogalli Ganesha paved way for the enrichment of Kannada Dalit Literature. Prof. B. Krishnappa established 'Dalita Sangharsha Committee' in Bhadravathi which was the soul charter for the DSS (Dalit Sangharsh Samithi) branching out to various organisations and movements for the oppressed. The discrimination of the daliths created a heart wrenching episodes of Poetic Literature which reflected the oppressed class in the society.

'Saviraru Nadigalu', 'Mookanige Bayi Bandaga', 'Bandedda Dalithara Beedi Hadugalu' were in poem format

Novels being: 'Kusuma Baale', 'Vadalaala', 'Kaarya', 'Maagi'. Short stories are : 'Dyavanoorara Kathegalu', 'Mugiyada Kathegalu', 'Buruuege Swarga', 'Atte'. Autobiographies being : 'Government Brahmana', 'Ooru Keri', 'Manegara', 'Manavilladavara Madhye', 'Sambholi'.

Raj Gowthaman, Ravikumar, Gowthama Sannah, Kudiarasan, Vadivel Ravanan, M.P. Ezhilarasu, Yakkan, Stalin Rajangam, Aranga Mallika, Manivannan, Punitha Pandian, Meena mayil, these are all the major contributors to the Non fictional Dalit Literature and first few are ideologue of Dalit political ideology in contemporary Tamil Dalit politics.

P.Sivakamy wrote first modern dalit fiction and Bhama, Artist Chandru, Abimaani, Azhagiya Peruyavan, Poomani, Poet.Sukirtharani, Poet. Pratibha Jayachandran, Chanakya, Dharman, vizhi.Pa.Idhaya vendhan, Yazhan Adhi and some others are worked on Dalit modern fiction literature and poetry.

Senchattai Panjacharam, A.Marx, S.V.Rajadurai, V.Gheetha, MSS.Pandian, are Non-Dalit writers for dalit ideology and dalit literature.

The Telugu writers in Andra Pradesh, extremely condemned the hegemony of elite class people and they focused the reality of Dalit experience in the their writings. They are Gurram Jashuva, Kusuma Dharmanna, Boyi Bheemanna, Kolakaluri Enoch, Siva Sagar (KG. Sathyamurthy), Gaddar, Boya Jangaiah, Chilukuri Devaputra, Kathi Padmarao, Bojja Tharakam, Endluri Sudhakar, Vemula Yellaiah, G. Kalyana Rao, Satish Chandar, GR. Kurme, Madduri Nageshbabu, Kalekuri Prasad, Gogu Shyamala, Jupaka Subhadra, Jajula Gowri, MM. Vinodini, Sujatha Gidla, Thullimalli wilson Sudhakar,challapalli Swarupa Rani,Sikhamani,

The south Indian poets, novelists, dramatists, social activists and others struggled hard to eliminate the obnoxious system breathing in the Indian social fabric.

Presently the Dalit discourse is very relevant to discuss the hard core realities of Dalit experience and find solution to exterminate from the grass root level for this in human practices hidden in the minds of upper cast people. The political system in India consciously and unconsciously betrayed the Dalits rites systematically. The political autocracy authoritatively suffocated and succumb the Dalits voices in India. The process of Dalits emancipation, day by day increasing in state by media, education, economic independency, political reservation etc. These might be the solution to come out from the age old slavery system that made by the upper class people.

Thus, Dalit literary movement is the unique example in India. It has proved an important platform to the lower classes to express their sense of identity and solidarity.

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5

The Emerging Dalit Theology: A Historical Review

—Anitha Yuvraj Kadad

Dalit theology is a new strand which has emerged in the Asian theological scene. This theology began to take shape in the early 80's when A.P. Nirmal, then a faculty member at the United Theological College, floated the idea of "Shudra Theology." But now, Dalit theology has come of age and it stands by its own uniqueness and creativity.

At the outset it is appropriate that I explain the term "Dalit" because it has come into popular use in India only very recently. The concept of the term "Dalit" goes back to the 19th century when a Marathi social reformer and revolutionary Mahatma Jyotirao Phule used it to describe the "outcastes" and "untouchables" as the "oppressed and crushed victims of the Indian caste system." In the 1970's the Dalit Panther Movement of Maharashtra gave currency to the term "Dalit" as a reminder that they were the depressed and the cast out section of Indian society and as a means of rejecting other names given to them with a paternalistic attitude.

"Outcastes" in India have been known by different names such as: "Harijan," meaning children of God given by Gandhi; "Avarrias" meaning casteless; "Panchamas" meaning fifth caste; "Chandalas" meaning worst of the earth; "Depressed classes" given during British Colonial days, and Scheduled Caste given by the Indian Constitution. Recent Dalit protest movements in India have increasingly

used the term Dalit to demonstrate the rejection of insulting names given by outsiders and further, to refer to their pain, suffering and hope for liberation.

James Massey, a prominent Dalit theologian captures the wide usage of the term Dalit as follows: Dalit is thus not a mere descriptive name or title, but an expression of hope for the recovery of their past identity. The struggle of these "outcastes" has given the term dalit a positive meaning. The very realisation of themselves as Dalit, the very acceptance of the state of "dalitness," is the first step on the way towards their transformation into full and liberated human beings.[1]

The dalit pather movement modeled after the black pather party and influenced by the philosophies of Dr.Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar. He was born in a poor Mahar (considered an Untouchable caste) family campaigned against social discrimination, the system of *Chaturvarna* – the categorisation of Hindu society into four *varnas* – and the Hindu caste system. He converted to Buddhism and is also credited with providing a spark for the transformation of hundreds of thousands of Dalits or untouchables to Theravada Buddhism. Dr. B R Ambedkar was posthumously awarded the Bharat Ratna, India's highest civilian award, in 1990.[2]

Historical review

Dalits who constitute almost 20% of the Indian population (200 million), were considered untouchables as a result of the Hindu understanding of "ritual pollution and purity." Dalits were not included in the four fold varna categories. At the top were the Brahmins, who considered themselves as the most ritually pure. Beyond the pale of society, "outcastes" were considered extremely polluted and were assigned occupations such as removal of dead animals, scavenging and cleaning of the village. They were also landless agricultural labourers and tanners. They were

banned from using village water tanks and public roads. Temple doors were closed on them.

1. Dalit Buddhist

Buddhism was once dominant in India; it had, however, begun to decline by the 12th century due to Muslim invasions and forced conversions[3]. The Buddhist revival began in India in 1891, when the Sri Lankan Buddhist leader Anagarika Dharmapala founded the Maha Bodhi Society[4] The Maha Bodhi Society mainly attracted upper-caste people.[5] The Dalit Buddhist movement [6] is a 19th and 20th-century Buddhist revival movement in India. It received its most substantial impetus from B. R. Ambedkar›s call for the conversion of Dalits to Buddhism, to escape a caste-based society that considered them to be the lowest in the hierarchy.[7]

2. Dalit Christians

Dalit Christianity is an unrestricted religion, the caste system found its way into it in India. Dalit Christians within the church were discriminated against and were denied powers within the priestly structure

Although Dalit Christians constituted approximately 70% of the Indian Christian population they were marginalized and ignored until recently. To illustrate this let me quote what Archbishop George Zur, Apostolic Pro-Nuncio to India said while inaugurating the CBCI (Catholic Bishops Conference of India) in 1991.

The destruction of the Jajmani system, communal ownership of landed property, by the British and introduction of legal land relationship changed the situation of Dalits for the worse. Jajmani had used traditional caste relationships for division of labour and had provided some material security for them, although it was an exploitative and unjust system.

Dalits in post-Independent India sought new avenues of liberation. One of the best examples of this new wave of Dalit emancipatory movement was the Dalit Panther Movement in Maharashtra which popularized the use of the term Dalit. The Dalit Panthers saw caste as the major source by which their "humanity" was being virtually reduced to a state of "being no people.[8]" However, class analysis also was used as an effective tool to understand the plight of this downtrodden people.[9]

Further there was a surge in the Dalit literature in 1960s. This literary tradition had a distinct anti-caste message. It embodied the Dalit search for a culture of their own and developed a counter culture parallel to the 'Great Tradition' without being co-opted into the Sanskritic tradition. This literary movement created a Dalit folklore with the assertion that they have had a culture of their own and that they do have one which is not in any way inferior to any other traditions of India[10].Dalit literary movements were considerably influenced by Black American Literature and there were direct references, although in passing to the Blacks' situation in America in these writings. The following is an interesting one:

The words "a peculiar institution" describe the untouchability created by the caste system. The Negro should not change the colour of his hide, nor the untouchable his caste. There is no difference between the place of the Negro in America and the step and level of the Untouchable in India. And so, for a long time, both were caught in whirlwind of self-denigration and self-hatred. Both were confined in the prison of fatalism. To prolong this imprisonment, the whites found authority in the Bible's myths and symbols, and the clean castes in the Vedas and Manusmniti.[11]

Closely following the teachings of B.R. Ambedkar, the 20th Century symbol of Dalit power and protest, the

Dalit asserted their separateness from other Hindus and demonstrated vehement opposition to classical Brahmanic Hinduism[12]. However, it may be stated that Dalit movement in India is not yet homogenous and does represent diverse policies and means of liberation. However, a pan-Indian psychological solidarity was increasingly emerging in the 1980s.

About philosophy Dr B. R. Ambedkar said as "*My* social philosophy may be said to be enshrined in three words: liberty, equality and fraternity. My philosophy has roots in religion and not in political science. I have derived them from the teachings of my master, the Buddha."

Dr B. R. Ambedkar left a permanent mark on Indian polity, society and economy with a broad range of scholarly work and accurate political activism. While much is known, heard and written about his political, social and economic writings, there has been an attempt at understanding the philosophical underpinnings and theoretical origins of his worldview.

A Counter-Theology

A Series of attempts and initiatives began in the early eighties to systematically articulate the faith in the context of the newly emerging Dalit aspiration for liberation. A.P. Nirmal, James Massey, M.E. Prabhakar, Dr.B.R Ambedkar, Jyothirao phule, K. Wilson, and F.J. Balasundaram are some of the prominent persons who figure in this theological movement. As theology predominantly became a vehicle to serve the elite interests, marginalizing the Dalits' faith, Dalit theology manifested itself as a counter-theology movement. Re-formulation and re-visioning were the objectives rather than reconstruction and deconstruction. Both the European missionary movement and the traditional Indian 'Christian Theology of the 20th Century were rejected as metaphysical speculations having

nothing to do directly with the history and existence of the marginalized majority within the Indian Church.

Dalit theologians felt the need to consciously reflect upon the oppressive situation of Dalits in India. "Thus, when Dalit theologians speak of Dalit theology," says James Massey: They are in fact making an affirmation about the need for a theological expression which will help them in their search for daily bread and their struggle to overcome a situation of oppression, poverty, suffering, injustice, illiteracy and denial of human dignity and identity. It is these realities of Dalit life which require the formulation of a Dalit theology. The highly philosophical schools of thoughts such as Gnana Marga, Karma Marga and Bhakti Marga were of no liberative and theological value to Dalits.

Major Affirmations and Features

The crucial function of Dalit theology is twofold: to act in unity and to act for liberation. Liberation is envisaged as liberation of Dalits from the historically oppressive structures both religio-cultural and socio-economic. Hence, theological articulation is not only a faith expression but also a means for liberation. According to this school of thought, any theological expression that will not lead to action and the resultant liberation is futile.

The enslavement of the Dalits by the dominating groups which comes under the critical scrutiny of Dalit theology but also the enslavement of the Dalit psyche or "the inner nature of Dalitness." James Massey describes it as "a self-captivity" of the Dalit community. Dalit theology seeks to liberate people from this slavery of "self-captivity," "a slavery from which it seems almost impossible to be liberated."[13] The psychological dimensions within the Dalit theological movement are far more significant than we see at the surface. This should be recognized as an important aspect of Dalit theology.

Future Directions

1. Dalit theology is part of the post colonial struggle of different communities for their distinct identity and space. In a largely homogenizing trend influenced by two processes namely globalization and Hinduisation, Dalits and Dalit Christians are still struggling for a Dalit identify of their own. Intra-Dalit conflicts and Dalit sub-groups still continue despite the striving for a common Dalit identity and solidarity. Therefore, the challenge for Dalit theology is to strike an ideal balance.

   Hindutva revival/reform movements are trying to absorb Dalits into a monolithic Hindu fundamentalist culture. Their systematic propaganda concentrates on the message that Dalits had been truly part of the 'Hindu' religio-cultural structures. Several Hindu organizations are involved in re-conversion efforts to drive home this ideology. Although it is a clear historical distortion, Dalits are caught up in a dilemma whether to declare their solidarity with Hindus' or with Dalits.' In fact Dalits are caught between Hinduisation and Dalitisation. This historic dilemma appears to have had its impact upon Dalit Christians and Dalit theological movement too. This may be the reason why this new strand of theology appears to be at a standstill right now.

   However, the recent efforts to genuinely develop a constructive theological strand are a welcome change. The trend setting work of Sathiyanathan Clarke, Dalits and Christianity Subaltern Religion and Liberation Theology in India (1998) deserves special mention here, as it opens up new avenues for Dalit theology movement.

2. The almost total dependence on Biblical thought for. Theological construction needs further reconsideration in the light of the historical experience of Dalits.

   Pre-existing/Christian egalitarian thoughts and struggle for equality and justice were evident in Dalit history and memory but the early Dalits had their own ways of protest and resistance. This is ignored by Dalit theologians.

   Dalit theologians also need to widen the definition of "texts," given the oral emphasis in Dalit Tradition By probing into Dalit folklore and songs they are likely to unearth extra textual sources for doing Dalit theology. This could also help create new hermeneutical principles unique to the Dalit theological movements[14].

3. While pathos, suffering and pain have found a place in Dalit theology, the rich Dalit traditions of celebrating life in the context of communitarian values seem to have been completely forgotten by Dalit theologians with few exceptions. The rich culture of the Dalit has a lot of democratic ideas. This needs to be further explored by Dalit theologians.

4. The 'dialogue' and 'accommodation' that take shape at the popular level of both Hinduism and Christianity need systematic consideration by Dalit theology. It appears that in a silent way people at the village level are moulding meaningful 'systems' of interaction in a pluralistic socio-religious setting like that of India. If "the reality of the religion of a people can be studied only through the empirical enquiry into the meaning appropriated by them as persons and community of persons in their life

situations," then Dalit theology needs to look carefully into popular level of Hindu-Christian religious encounter.

Conclusion

The Dalit theology has to reappear its stand on the issues of State, Religion, other modes of exploitation and culture. It needs to restate its objective in clearer terms, whether it aims at establishing a society based on liberty, equality, and fraternity or at just reversing the sides in the equation of exploitation. It will have to rethink about its friends and foes in this context. The era of globalisation increasingly demands clearer stands by various classes of people. It already appears without its vitality and badly stagnated in the past. Its consequent degeneration has already hit the Dalit masses. It needs serious self-criticism.

While there is a need for ruthless self-criticism in the Dalit movement along the above lines it should not mean denying its positive aspects. There are many of them: it implanted positive values of liberty, equality and fraternity; it promoted political consciousness to struggle against exploitation and injustice; it declared its commitment to scientific rationalism and opposition to hypocrisy of any kind. In terms of its gains, it has created significant resource base for itself in terms of education, organisational experience, and experience of working with the equipment of its opposition.

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6

Dalit Literature and Non Dalit Writers

—*Srinivasappa. G.*

In the modern Indian Literary Scenario there are many discourses emerged and got their identical stand and themselves like Orientalism, Feminism, Romanticism, Modern, Post modern, Pragathisheela, Bandaya, and Dalit literature and so on. Dalit is the youngest literary discourse which has got its trends and movements and its relevance today.

The paper unfolds the concept of Dalit literature, The foreground of Dalit discouse, features of Dalit writings, The content and voice as a movement. Difference between Dalit and Non Dalit writings and mode of equilibrium between them in Indian Literary context.

It is believed that 'Dalit' is a 'Caste'. It is out caste, untouchable caste, under privileged caste, depressed caste, down trodden caste, low caste and like. But it is not a caste. It is a social movement of voice against injustice and humiliation for no cause. It is a symbol of change and revolution of the socially and economically exploited. The term Dalit means oppressed or broken. It is a Hindi term which is the translation of 'depressed classes'. It is used by British as 'depressed classes' which constitutionally called as scheduled castes by Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. Later Dalit panthers revived it and expanded its reference to scheduled tribes and poor peasants, women those are being constantly exploited politically, socially and economically as the least. In Kannada it is known as ' Parishista'. It is

different from 'Shista'section of Indian society. Hence Dalit is separated from the superior section. The poorest section in Indian society is being exploited socially, economically and politicallyfor many years from Verna system. I quote poetic line from 'Petromax Hottavaru' by Mudlakodu Chinnaswamy- 'Pandits, Poets forget the fruits of the folklore.'

The concept of Dalit is simplified that those who have undergone the exploitation in every castes and classes. But there is a difference between Dalit and Exploited. It is to be seriously acknowledged to get true sense of the Dalit. It should not be confused and mislead. Because Dalits are not only exploited but beyond of it, they are being inhumanly torched and treated with violence and cruelty and they lived without their identity. Today Dalit is known with new trends of the term 'Subltern'-marginalized. Subatern or Dalit could not speak for many years. But it is found in the Non Dalit writings in India. Today marginalized get the chance to express about themselves both in tongue and letters. Dalits write about their own darker side of life. Dalit youths were influenced and found inspiration in the movement of Blacks of North America.

Features of Dalit literature – used cult and dialect as their language. It is considered as out-caste language. It is under privileged in Indian Society. There is a shame, anger, sorrow and indomitable hopes are the stuff of Dalit literature. There is a search for alternative life pattern. There is an insight on the question of Dalit-identity. There was an identity of out-caste and untouchable but now in the literature they seek for Independent identity. It is their self identity and their own stand and its foot prints. There is a constant struggle for identity - dignity- dignified identity in their works. This is how they reject sub-human status imposed on them by the Hindu Social order.

There is a humble attempt of dalit ideology where it questions the literary theories of upper caste ideologies

and explored the 'neglected' aspects of life. There is a diversity of experience of life. Life is experienced and felt in all dimensions of life. Complete, objective, practical and experimental aspects of first hand experience of natural life are explored and which leads to anticipate colorful experience. They experience life as a whole not as a part. Even Non Dalit writers focus Dalit voice in their writings and fostered it and created a foreground for the Dalit to inculcate it. But it is a mere speculative and subjective one. It is thrice removed from the truth. As Plato in his 'Republic' attacked poets and poetry. I quote 'poets are lairs and poetry is thrice removed from truth'. It weakens minds. 'It is imitation of imitation' where as Non Dalit writers followed the principle of Aristotle who in his Poetics', says that 'Poetry is the 'imitation of action'.

Dalit literature is based on platonic theory of Plato where as Non Dalit writings based on Aristotelian theory of imitation of action. One is objective and the other is subjective. There is a direct experience of downtrodden life. It is the writings about Dalits and where in the writers expose their sufferings, agony, depression, inferiority, injustice, humiliation and exploitation and life without literacy. They express black side of life with their own language.

In the Poetry of N.K. Hanumanthaiah, "Govu Thindu Govinanthadavaru". It is observed that as a dalit poet, N.K. expressed the food habit of Dalits who eat cow and they become Govu. Here we can understand the effect of scarcity of food, their hunger, eagerness to eat raw flesh of dead cows and they imbibed the nature of cow. It means they become soft, kind, humble, human, nature of scarifying everything to exploiters. As cow is a Kumadenu-Kalparuksha, so Dalits sacrificed their entire life for the well being of others. It is belived that, as it is put in the Vachana of Basavanna- 'Kolluvavane Madiga, Holasu Thinnuvavane Holaya, Here in this context, those who eat flesh are not be

holaya, [Holasu Thindavaru Holayaragalilla,] rather they become humble human being. There is a human love and kind heard.

I quote another great poet and thinker K.B. Siddaiah who disclosed his intensity of Dalit mode of life in his outstanding poetry 'Galle Baani'.

E Dheha, nanna Dheha, Idi Dheha Bhavada Sala

Thiri hogalendu Saala

Edi Deha Maribitte

Mooru Kaasige

Kolluvavaru Kollalilla

Mudiyuvavaru Muttalilla

Eralibidu E Dheha

Hogali bidu Nanna Dheha

Endu Arithe Kattakadege

Sulidu, Sulidu, Sulidu Charma Sulidu,

Mettu Holedu, Metti, Metti, Metti,

Bittu Bitte, Mettu Biduva Jagadalli.

In the above lines of the poet, It is expressed his height of thoughts. He thinks as a Saint Poet, that the body of his is not of himself but of nature, it is to be sold for the earthly life. But even the butcher does not buy it, untouched by touched, finally he decides to peel the skin of his body and mend it into a sandal and let it at its place.

The expression of dalits' liberation into letters is reflected in the words of K. B. Siddaiah like-

Kajagadha Dhoni Ejuva Soliga

Kaaniro Kaaniro

Kanniddavaru Kaaniro

Kallillada Doni Thelluthade

Kannillada Doni Noduthade

Kivi illada Doni Keluthade

Moogillada Doni Musutthade

Haruthade Birugalige Thuri Hoguthade

Kichina Kaddi Geeri Hachidare

Suttu Hoguttade,

Budiyugattade

Kanniro Kaaniro

Here the poet is delighted at his expression of letters through which he offers the minds to open their eyes, awake their sense towards the new trends of writing and identified his 'dignified identity' and taste the worth of the stuff. The poet is stepping into the world of letters and proves the landmark in the history of literature.

In the poetry of 'Anatma' the poet K.B.S. declared in his invocation as

O Devare! Neenu Nannathe Huttu, Balika

Mutti nodu, Muttu Gettu Nodu!

Hutti Nodu, Nannathe Hutti nodu!

The poet said in the above context, expressed the experience of untouched is not inferiority, not worshiping and not ego itself. But it is an experience of realization into liberation. It is a light of finding real man. For hungry rice is Guru. For born untouchable child, the first touch of life is Guru. She advised to find man in self. In the context, 'I quote, 'Know thy self, proper understanding mankind is man' of Alexander Pope. It is a long journey to find his self and let his dignified identity intc the world of letters.

I quote a relevant related reference from the poem "KARIMOGAD KENDA" by Dalit poet

H. Govindaiah. 'Hottegiliyada Tutthu

Suduva Muddeya Kichchu

Ottige Bandu

Mygodavi nintthithu

Thambigeya Kasidu Ghata Ghatane Kudidithu.

The above lines of the poem the poet represents the intensity of hunger of Dalit and they way in which he implied (inflicted) his agony of hungry by grabbing the tiny pot to drink with un descending food. It is observed his struggle for his first basic need.

Dhaniya Kanadolage

Bhanaveya neri

Hasanu Madida

Kaigalige Muttisade

Neera Suriddittu Thambige.

The poet brings out the sense of untouchable conscious of the touchable and how he experienced and faced incredible life.

Devanur Mahadeva is one of the prominent writers in Kannada Dalit discourse. He has baged Odalala, Kusumabaale and Edege Bidda Akshara and so on. They represent him as an outstanding Dalit writer today. In his recent work 'EDEGE BIDDA AKSHARA' has become a mesmerized food to think and draw the attention of the contemporary critics. It is said that it has explored 'Hindu Swaraj' of Gandhiji. His writing is a movement to bring social revolution in the society. The struggles of Devanur Mahadeva in this work are considered as autobiographical note. Thus many Dalit writers expressed their experience of life objectively and their voice is to bring a radical and revolutionary change in Indian Society.

Daya Pawer, the Marathi poet novelist and activist. His novel Baluta (1978) was an autobiographical narrative of the atrocities suffered by Dalits which shook Marathi society. The encouraging response caused him to write another book detailing the negative response he received from him Dalit community after the publication of 'Baluta'.

As is evident, his work both poetry and prose is concerned with revealing the horrors of the caste system and the cruelties inflicted on the individuals by society due to this system.

In poem, 'Oh Great Poet' the tradition of Daya Pawer has raised the issues of caste inequality and oppression as well as questions of indoctrination and literary values in this poem. The great poet in the very title who is addressed Valmiki the author of Ramayana. Daya Pawer jnxtaposes the misery of Valmiki's life and back ground against his monumental work in which he glorifies 'Rama Rajya'.

By playing Valmini's lower caste back ground and the atrocities suffered by his community and his people as a counter to the 'Praises of Ramayana' Daya pawer raises the issues of what it is to be a great poet. Is the quality of his verse and his thoughts what makes a great poet or is it that poetry should be a weapon, a mode of protest, a medium to raise the consciousness of the down trodden and express their pain? Pawer also speaks about the ways in which caste inequalities are strengthened and perpetuated by the indoctrination that colludes without right oppression. The internalization of inequality and inferiority by members of the lower castes which causes them to remain in positions of marginality is also shown by Valmiki's reluctance to speak about his people and their problems, preferring to focus on a Ramarajya during which his own people continued to be outcaste and oppressed. An instance of their oppression can be seen in the story of Shambuka in the Ramayana. Shambuka was a member of the lower castes whose head was chopped off by Rama for dashing attempt to read the Vedas.

Kuvempu in Kannada Literature created a vibrant revolution with his writings. He in the true sense sowed the seed of rational thinking in the Indian people. He enriched Kannada Literature. His great play "Shudra Tapasvi" inspired dalit minds. It is a radical protest against Vaidika

system. In the epic Ramayana the onslaught of Shambuka is inhuman activity of king Rama. It was the tradition of the Indian social system that Shambuka like Shudra did not meditate in the name of Lord Shiva (tapasya). It was against to the Brahminic Religion. Due to this a son of Bhrahmin was dead. It is thought that because of the tapasya of Shambuka, the young Brahmin was dead and gone in the land. Then Brahmin requested Rama to kill Shambuka. As a result Rama killed Shambuka and the young dead boy got back into life.

But Kuvempu in his play 'Shudra Tapaswi' crossed inhuman culture of Brahmin and modified the theme and action of the play that Shambuka saint is not permitted to meditate. During his meditation, a Brahmin boy comes across the flower garden to get flowers but he does not respect him with his greetings. As he violates religion of the land, he dies. It becomes a sin for him. Finally the Brahmin himself too dies as a result of sin he commits. In the context of the play, Kuvempu, enlightened the minds of Dalit writers.

Kancha Ilaiah is a teacher and writer-activist, active in the Dalit Bahujan and Civil liberties Movements. The essay 'Why I am not a Hindu?' focuses on the differences between the Dalit-Bahujan way of life and the Brahmanical way of life. He tries to create an identity for the Dalits based on their lived experiences.

'Why I am not a Hindu?' tells the reader about the wide gulf that exists between dalit children and upper caste children in school environs, ability to identify what they are taught and their value systems.

The essay is written in an autobiographical mode and documents the alienation of dalit child in the school. He denies the myth that is constructed and spread by the hindutva forces that the dalits are also Hindus. He shows how dalits are different from Hindus in their ways of life,

the gods they worship, or the values they have developed. He shows the basic differences which range from food habits to gender roles to religious beliefs.

He also comments on the effects of this discrimination. Dalits feel excluded. This has given rise to resentment and anger. The hindutva ideology is thought of as the only dominant ideology.

The essay ends with a call for a change in ways of thinking. There is a need to recognize the new version of history and the need to change the social fabric of Indian society.

For the first generation dalitbahujan and opportunity to go to school was a blessing. The difference between a dalit and the Hindu was markedly seen. The Brahman-baniya children were better dressed and better fed. The children came from different cultural backgrounds. Their eating habits were different. Dalit bahujans relished on meat whereas Brahmin-baniya had nausea towards it. These differences were the result of upbringing. The attitude of the teacher towards the student depended on his caste background. A Brahman teacher hated to teach 'sudra' students. He felt that as sudras worked in dirty, muddy fields they were mad, dirty and unaesthetic. But the writer feels proud that mud is good because it is the birth place of food and working people's ideas.

According to the teachers the children who came from Brahmin, baniya and upper caste landlord families were great ones because they did not work in farms, washed cleanly and their hairs carefully oiled and combed. But the people who made chappals did not have them to wear. The dalit-bahujan children were seen to be ignorant, ugly and unclean.

. The stories from Ramayana and Mahabharatha they learnt in schools were unheard before. Unlike the dalit-bahujan boys, Brahmin-baniya children were familiar

with these stories. They worshiped these gods and had the images of these devathas in their temples and homes. They bore their names. The textbook Telugu was different from the production-based communicative Telugu. In all terms, with respect to language, content and dialect dalit-bahujan students were alienated both from Telugu text and as well as the English Text.

Mainstream Telugu literature did not have written narratives associated with dalit-bahujan gods and goddesses. No writer thought that these stories could be included in school and college textbooks. The very names of these gods and goddesses are not worth mentioning. No telugu writer thought that going down to people's culture means talking about these gods and goddesses. The contents of the daily lives of these people have never been the subject of writers. The dalit-bahujans were the other and the 'Other' never becomes the 'Centre' of main-stream narratives.

Counter-narratives were written to Puranas praised by purohits by the communist and rational writers. They imitated the language of the purohit themselves. Their culture was sanskritised and the dalit-bahujans are not part of Hindu culture. Even though the Dalit-bahujan are more in number nobody understood that they also had a language, identity and culture. Kancha ilaiah terms this neglect of dalit-bahujan culture as silent violence. The consciousness of dalit-bahujan culture was never allowed to enter into their consciousness. Their childhood was mutilated by constant abuse and a stunning silence. There was a conspiracy to suppress the formation of their cultural consciousness.

The entry of word into their homes was nipped in the bud. In schools, both the teacher and the textbooks were against them. The dalit-bahujan culture was entirely different from the hindu culture. The gap was enormous and both of them were poles apart. There was no

encouragement or motivation to enter into education like the upanayana or the gurukula that was customary among the brahmans.

The hindus are gradually following the very customs which they hated during the freedom struggle. They send their children to convents and allow them to learn English. But the dalit-bahujans with no other alternative left send their children to the same Telugu-medium schools where they teach Hindu puranas and epics. This is a paradox. Dalit-bahujans also practice child-marriage like the Hindus. But in D-B culture there is widow remarriage and also permission to divorces. Divorce from an irresponsible husband is a sanctioned social act. The practice of 'Sati' is not popular and if husband died, the widow could remarry. The textbooks taught about all these evil practices of sati and widow life. Not even one text books told stories about women who denied these practices and carved independent lives out of it. The text-book morality was different from the living morality.

In hindu culture a knowledgeable man was one who knows Vedas and a courageous man was one who kills enemies even when the enemies are friends and relatives. In D-B culture, a knowledgeable person is one who has knowledge of sheep-breeding, agriculture, rope-making; and one who can treat animal and human diseases. A courageous man was one who fought against wild animals and natural calamities.

Brahmin culture eulogizes negative heroes and negative heroines, because their life is alienated from the socioeconomic environment in which a real hero/heroine is constructed. Their achievement is to read the Vedas and puranas by heart. Womanhood is seen as terms of devotion to the husband and cooking with purity and pollution in mind. In their heroic narratives acquiring private property is idealized.

The heroes and heroines in Dalit-Bahujan communities emerged not because they killed somebody but because they saved people from hunger, diseases and so on. Hindu morality is opposite to D-B living morality. Women are equal to men in all respects. No woman is thought of badly because she smokes or drinks. Thus a re-search is necessary to identify what are the true values that are to be upheld, the upper caste Hindu unequal and inhuman cultural values or D-B cultural values? It is time to create D-B history and change the exploiting Brahman-baniya social fabric.

Right from the childhood a D-B child is made diffident because it is projected that Brahmin-Baniyas' non-productive ritualistic life is great and D-B non-ritualistic working life is mean. Brahmanism has spoken about itself as a greater race and a better breed. Their social position passes on to their children without any effort. Caste system and lack of education has forced dalits to be diffident and this has passed on to generations' in spite of possessing great skills.

The very Hindu gods are set against the dalits. The Brahmin-Baniyas walked over the corpses of D-B culture. They were the gluttons who fed on the hard production of the dalits. They never contributed anything to the national economy. Their notion of life was unworthy but they repeatedly say that dalit life is useless. Kancha ilaiah concludes that after acquiring the education and seen the world, the whole process of their childhood is nothing but anger and anguish.

The renowned writers like Lahiya, Dr. Ambedkar Dr. Siddalingaiah, Arovindu malagathi, Subbu Holeyar, Rahamat Tarikere, Daya Pawer, Kanch Illaiah contributed a lot for the Dalit literary movement today.

There is an honest and humble attempt to point out the core issues of its ideology. In the context it can be said

that Dalit literature questioned the main stream literary theories and upper caste ideologies and explore the past experience and anticipating the positive persective of the future. Dalit literature is experienced. For Dalit writer's history is not illusionary and speculative one. There is an authenticity and liveliness that has become hall marks of Dalit discouse. They have used the language of out caste as their dialect. It is the tongue of nativity. They search for alternative life. I quote the words of Arjun Dangle, the Marathi writer- "Even the sun needs to be changed". There is a law of change in the movements of sun.

Non Dalit writers have also contributed a lot for the development Dalit literature. The voice of Dalit is recorded and depicted artistically as lively as possible, life like, by the reknowned writers like, Kuvempu, Kararath and U.R. Anantha Murthy and so on.

The eminent writer and academic U.R. Anantha Murthy said that Dalit literature, whether oral or written has been an integral and enlivening part of Indian Literary traditions for centuries. For the depressed classes like tribal and those destined to live in the lower rungs of the social hierarchy literature has always been a means to achieve 'self respect'. He further said, Non Dalits could write about the Dalit situations, they could not claim to represent the Dalits.

There are several examples of Non Dalit writings in the situation like the famous Kannada Novel 'CHOMANA DUDI' by Shivarama Karanth. There was a kind of arrogance to represent Dalits. The character of 'Choma' and his daughter 'Belli'are portrayed as a typical dalit identity of flesh and blood. The only asset of him is his children and two cows. The mode of his earning is to work in the lands of Bhoganahalli Sankapaiah. (Dhani) 'Dudi' is only a 'tool' of expressing his agony, helplessness and to relax his life stress. It is a symbol of protest and recreation for his

relatives in the feast. The only dream of his entire life is to get his own piece of land and (becomes a farmer of it) plough it for himself. He struggled a lot till the end of his life but he could not get it. But his son 'Guruva' got it by converting into Christianity. But when he himself wanted to convert into Christianity like his son his roots of Hindu Tradition could never let him convert.

Through out the novel, especially Choma and Belli, suffered a lot, struggled a lot get a little rice to live. The series of shocks out of elopement of Guruva, death of Chaniya and Neela, immoral relationship of Belli with Land lord, disturbed him. Then he played 'Dudi' and died by playing it.

The bhramical hegemony avoids Sankapaiah to give land to Choma and Neela is not saved by a Bhrahmin as Neela is untouchable boy. There two incidents has made to loose his self control and dies. Here in the novel the writer tries to give justice for the Dalit voice.

The present paper tries to compare both the Non Dalit writers and Dalit literature. It also brings out the similarities and difference in the two literary discourses. Non Dalit writings in many ways and means influenced, either directly or indirectly to find their stand in the Indian society. Dalit voice and their social pattern of life are brought into literature as well but it was not independent voice of movement. Though, Dalit literature got it its foreground in the Non-Dalit writings, it has got its own independent place in Indian literature. The stigma of Untouchability and humiliation is gradually removed with the emergence of Dalit literature since 12th century Bhakthi movement. Today really it becomes a worthy voice of all depressed classes. The end of any writing is to be creative and artistic to bring a revolutionary change in any system and brings about harmony between and among the literary minds and others.

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7

Non-Dalit Wirters and Dalit Literature

—Badiger Gutteppa

Etymologically the word 'Dalit is derived from Sanskrit which means suppressed, crushed. It was first used by Jyotirao phule in the nineteenth century. Where as Mohandas Gandhi used the word Harijan, means 'Children of God'. the terms ' Scheduled castes' and 'scheduled Tribes' are the official terms used in Indian government documents. However, in 2008, the National Commission for Scheduled Castes nothing that 'Dalit' was being used interchangeably with the official term 'Scheduled Castes' called the term unconstitutional and asked the state government to end its use.

Who Is A Dalit?

The people who are economically, socially, politically exploited from centuries have been living outside the village depending on lower level of occupation and lived as untouchables are called 'Dalits'.

What Is Dalit Literature.

Dalit literature refers to the writings of dalits on Dalit life the Dalit writers argued that the experiences and the humiliation undergone by Dalits cannot be imagined or explained by non dalit writes so, one may find slight difference in the writings of non-Dalits on Dalits, In this

discussion many writers from both dalit and non-dalit communities were participated Non-Dalits who wrote about dalit life were identified as only protest writers though they expressed their anger against the injustice of the society their ideas were more concerned with economic inequality. But the prime concern of Dalit Writers was social injustice. So, these Dalit writers considered their own writings as Dalit literature. They concluded the writings of 'on Dalits' as protest literature.

Uniqueness of Dalit Literature.

The Dalit literature can be compared to the Black literature of Africa, the notion of feeling, pain, exploitation, harassment, expressed here could be seen even in the writings of china Achebe, N.gugi Wa Thiango, wole soyinka etc. There is a similarity between the tradition and cultures expressed in the writings of Dalits of India and these African writers, Dalit literature is special than other literature, because the Dalit who lived out of villages able to present their rich culture. It is not contaminated or altered by mingling with other cultures, such culture gets expressed of its custom, belief in its adaptability of language. The language looks to tally different from the other existing languages style, present, subject matter are also different.

The importance of Dalit literature is that it tries to compare the past situation of Dalits to the present and future generation not to create hatred in Dalits towards upper class/castes, but to create an awareness in them to challenge their struggle against the oppressors.

The other important feature of Dalit literature is protest and rejection of Brahmans. The Brahminism is a mental state which accepts superiority over another man. This mental state of Brahminism not only exists in Brahmins but also in shudras, who simply ape the ideas of Brahminical practices without testing them with scientific temperament.

Datit literature as an emerging trend

After independence, especially in 1970s there is an increased awareness among dalits to express their sufferings. Dalit literature has emerged every where. There is marathi dalit literature, Gujarati dalit literature and so on. Thus, here, emerging of only kannada dalit literatmre is concentrated.

B. Basalingappa is called Ambedkar of Karnataka his criticism on kannada literature gave an intensity to dalit activities in Karnataka when he was invited to a function in Mysore on 18th Nov. 1973, in his speech he said that Kannada literature is Boosa (fodder) literature.

The intention behind calling Kannada literature Boosa was misinterpreted in Media, then Psuedo Kannada Lovers protested against this statement and demanded for the resignation of Mr. Basalingappa. This incident made the dalits get knit together to it the lamp of enlightenment.

"Holemadigara Hadu' is a ground breaking work in kannada Dalit literature. Though it is not the first Dalit work, it is important in many respects.

The first Dalit work in kannada literature is S.Siddappa's 'Govugala Golata' Published in 1932, he has written 16 works in total in his life time. Nalvadi Krishnaraya Vadeyar Called him 'Navakavi'.

In his work 'Mata Sudharane', he speaks of what to do to uplift dalits and prevent their exploitation. He has spoken what dalits should not do to come up in the society.

The Dalit writers in kannada started their journey of literature poetry. Later On, it extended to short stories and novels. Here, only three but eminent representative Dalit writers in kannada are discussed.

Siddalingayya:

His 'Holemadiyara Hadu' is his famous anthology of poems. Though, it is not the first Dalit work in kannada it is this

work which not only comprises of Dalit consciousness but also as.

Dr. Nagaraj says that no other poet has reached to the reader to the extent siddalingayya did after Bendre.

He has become a mouthpiece of dalit community. In this work one can see that his language is outrageous. He is aggressive and straight forward in his expression.

Aravinda Malagitti:

He is an another important kannada Dalit writer. siddalingayya's works represented Dakshina Karnatak while Aravinda Malagthi works, North Karnataka. Malagatt's novel 'Karya' is a famous story ends in a day. the character Bangaravva is no more. She was given proper burial on the third day of the burial, the ritual to be performed at the cemetry is called 'Karya'.

Keeping this at the outset, Malagati has shown in the novel how dalits are being exploited on intellectual and economical level.

'Government Brahman' is his autobiography. It is the first Dalit Autobilghy in kannada literature. It is not only related to the life of the author alone, but the community around him, their troubles and tribulations. their struggle for existence etc. The work is a voice against humiliation, subjugation and calls for implementation of social justice. It interrogates and deconstructs caste supremacy.

Devanooru Mahadeva:

Many Dalit novels are very small in size they don't ever exceed even hundred pages this is true even in the case of Devanooru Mahadeva. He was recognized mainly as a short story writer in the beginning, but later wrote novels.

Odalal

This work speaks about Hunger. In this work he tells us how Dalit are treated even by those who have the duty to provide security and give futwre to the ordinary people.

Sakavva is the protoganist who asks a police for help to search her stolen cock. But he, instead of assisting her usurps her another cock.

BASAVANNA'S WAY OF NEGOTIATING DALIT ISSUE – DIFFERENRT ASPECTS

At the beginning, everything is an idea. It spreads, it grows and it becomes into a movement, a revolution. Ideas float around but the personality that catches them, brings them into realization through actions matters a lot. The constancy, the perseverance and the will to hold to those ideas make them living reality. Prophets, seers, revolutionaries and great men lived up to their ideas, spread them consistently, braced them up and faced all kinds of hardships for the sake of these ideas. Finally, many of them sacrificed their lives while others lived for the sake of their ideas which they thought reality. In short, they become 'mad' for their ideas and made others mad for these ideas.

One such great personality who consistently spread his ideas was Basaveswara. He was a visionary and saw that his ideas had to be spread after his life time, so he built a community of visionaries, who could consistently persevere the goal of realizing these ideas into realities in day to day life. So, a small idea grew into a group, this group into a community. Later, it took the shape of a caste and a religion. Change is the nature of the world. Change is constant. Ideas can also change. They can't remain as they are. New, subsidiary ideas cling around them with different colors and meanings. These ideas create a group which is diametrically opposite to those original ideas. It is human drama which is entertaining to see but also sorrowful to watch.

One such idea is 'equality' among all human beings, which caught the fancy of several great men at several times in history at several places. Some could not digest the idea of 'inequality and discrimination' meted out to a section of people. They found no reason to separate them from the main stream and withdrew certain privileges. They could not bear insults poured on some people because of their birth. At different places, different people tried to negotiate with this question of discrimination. Color is the issue in European, American and African countries which was taken up from time to time by some visionaries.

Untouchability is the issue, these visionaries grapple in Indian society then and now. Basaveswara was one such visionary, who tried to negotiate with the issue of untouchability. He couldn't see any meaning in discriminating a section of human beings as 'untouchables'. He could see perfect sameness in all human beings metaphysically, emotionally, physically and socially. But, he couldn't leave this 'idea of equality' without taking it up to its logical end. He was persistent and ready to experiment and implement it in his own way, in his own group.

The distance in time i.e. from the 21st century back to 12th century and lack of evidence through historical material, it is everybody's guess to make any kind of assumptions on the works of Basavanna or what Basavanna intended or not intended. It is highly impossible to say that he had intended to reform or revolutionize the Hindu society, or wanted to eradicate all the evils of society. It would also be impossible to say, whether he wanted to build a parallel religion devoid of all these evils or he wanted to reform it from inside. Anybody can think on either side and argue on his own lines and could even show evidence in support of his views. So, in this playground of multifarious ideas, I confine myself to the idea of how Basavanna tried to negotiate with his ideas of equality in his own group.

This group of visionaries includes some known names like Siddarama, Chenna Basavanna, Allama, Akka Mahadevi, Madara Chennaiah and also innumerable unknown Sharanas. This small group tried to implement, inculcate, and digest this idea of equality among them. This group was essentially drawn from the big community where 'untouchability' was part of social structure which was normal and natural. So, there was a clash between their ideology and practicality. The self of the participants raises its head again and again, so it should be taught this new idea of equality to convince themselves on multifarious level. The idea should be spread; tested, negotiated and also convincing arguments should be propounded.

The first and the foremost platform, Basavanna and Sharanas took up to propound equality was at the metaphysical level. Man is equal, for that matter; all animals and man are equal as one soul i.e. Atman, Brahman that pervades them. When only one 'Atman' which is variously named as Brahman, Siva, Linga, pervades all, then where is inequality. Purely, at metaphysical level there is no difference between man and man. The same had been made to realize by an untouchable to Adi Shankara. So, one can accept metaphysically, all are equal. The same fact has been beautifully put in Kannada words through vachanas of Basavanna and other vachanakaras. It is the way of reinforcing the idea again and again so that it sunk well into their small group which had experimented with novel but natural idea of equality.

Did the soul of a woman have

Breasts and braids?

Did the soul of a priest wear the Sacred thread?

Did the soul of a low caste person

Hold a staff in its hand?

How do the ignorant people of this world

Understand the riddle complicated by you,

O Ramanatha! (Jadara Dasimayya, SVS, Vol. 7 V) (2003, C.R.Yaravintilimath & M.M.Kalburgi – v 168, page – 96).

But, the ideal and the practical differ a lot. Sometimes, the ideal is a lot dangerous and practical is made safe by consensus of the society. Whatever, the reinforcement of ideas at the level of ideal won't help to implement that idea at the level of day to day living? It needs special strategies at the practical level to tackle it.

Basavanna and vachanakaras tried to establish the fact of equality of all people by making them equal at theological level. Theology is a kind of day to day adjustment. They built a community, a group where they started implementing 'a common code of conduct' for all the group members. This common code of conduct insists on uniformity at the basic level of dress, food, way of living, addressing a person, way of earning and spending, in brief, they built their own culture of the group.

At the theological level, they implemented the theory of one God, one way of worshipping, one cluster of external symbols of that worship. In this particular case they are called, 'Astavarana'. They run like 'Guru, Linga, Jangama, Vibuthi, Rudrakasha, Padodaka, Prasada, Mantra' these are the theological symbols. They also insisted in theological way of life. Obligatory ways or attitudes to be inculcated by men and Strong determinations to follow these obligations by them are enumerated. They are 'Panchacharas' which goes on like 'Lingachanara, Sadachara, Shivachanara, Ganachara and Brityachara'. They also tried to inculcate way of earning and spending to make the group sustain itself economically and also support the members of the group, who exclusively looked after the group activities, so that they introduced 'Kayaka and Dasoha', work culture as well as sharing culture.

So, members of the group, who follow all these 'common codes of conduct', are one and the same. They are equal in all respects at least within the group.

But, this group is also a part of the longer group i.e. society at that time. There were conventions and hierarchical order in that society. No society was an exception to this hierarchical order of living. Basavanna, thought, that too rightly, the people who belong to the lowest of the low of the society need special attention and special reinforcement. He stated again and again that all these sections of people attain divinity, sacredness thus they become 'touchables' when they follow this 'common code of conduct' of the group. The resultant vachanas, question, convince, cajole, order on this particular issue of 'untouchablility'. There is also a lot of reasoning, propounding hypothesis and proving the hypothesis as part of the issue of 'untouchability' in vachanas of Vachanakaras.

The theological equality is reflected in this vachana. It asserts,

> Who so he be, how so high in rank,
>
> Without the Linga's touch he will be the lowest in caste
>
> The moment Linga touches a person; he will become a high caste man,
>
> As at the touch of Parusha, The base metal becomes gold without fail:
>
> Lord Kudala Sangha won't like the doubting devotees. (Basavanna, SVS Vol.1 v.142) (2003, C.R.Yaravintilimath & M.M.Kalburgi – v 168, page – 96).

The assertion that wearing of 'Linga' makes one 'touchable' and he will no longer be an untouchable. The 'linga on anga' makes the anga as sacred as linga. But, vachanakaras are never satisfied with the assertion. They resorted to reasoning on various levels. One of that is on ethical level. All the people who are ethically good are good and so are to be respected and revered.

> He alone is a Madiga who kills animals,
>
> He alone is a Holeya who eats filth,
>
> What worth is the caste of those well born,

Who sacrifice an animal and eat it?

Our Kudala Sanga's devotees

Who wish all the living well,

Are only well-born. (Basavanna – SVS Vol 1, v 591) (2003, C.R.Yaravintilimath & M.M.Kalburgi – page – 37).

On ethical and theological grounds untouchables are not untouchables. But, from general to specific, universal to particular is the journey of literature. Madara Chennayya was made representative of the issue of untouchability. He was again and again brought into the vachanas to stress equality of untouchable in this group.

It's better to stay with a righteous man,

Even if he is a low-born Holeya, O Lord!

Surrender to the Linga, never stray, from the path of virtue,

In our Kudala Sanga's Maha Mane, O Sir,

Madara Chennayya is a righteous man! (Basavanna, SVS Vol 1. V 135) (2003, C.R.Yaravintilimath & M.M.Kalburgi – page – 29).

There is also an explicit statement that those who are not following this 'common code of conduct', they are real untouchables. The logic of 'untouchables become 'touchables' and 'touchables become untouchables' by the act of worshipping or not worshipping Linga is the strategy of vachanakaras. Birth has nothing to do with this. Though, one is born as Brahmin, he is considered lowest of the low, if he won't worship Linga. This assertion, this repetition, though odd at the beginning, changes into 'normal and natural' in course of time. We see innumerable vachanas of this nature.

O God, by worshipping Thee

Cenna's caste become pure;

O God, by worshipping Thee

Dasa's caste become sacred!

"He is a superior sage,

Who is engaged in the Linga worship

Though he be a Svapaca,

Who does not worship the Linga,

Though he be a Brahmin."

This being the truth,

What caste onei is born in?

He alone is a Holeya,

Who does not say,

'I salute Thee, the un-born". (Basavanna, SVS. Vol. 1, v 605) (2003, C.R.Yaravintilimath & M.M.Kalburgi, page – 38).

Like this, Vachanakaras tried to negotiate with the question of untouchability at the level of ethics, way of life, food habits along with philosophical and theological aspects. But, Basavanna was not satisfied with this, he again reiterated this with his personal identification with the untouchables. His personal identification is so intense that it was taken as evidence to show that he belonged to untouchables and subsequently, there was a controversy over this issue. This personal identification and going a step forward to be with them is also a strategy followed by him to make them equals in his group. His vachana says,

Our Madara cennayya is my father,

Our Dohara Kakkayya is my elder uncle;

Look you, Cikkayya is my grand-father;

Our Kinnara Bommayya is my elder brother,

Then how come you know me not,

O Lord Kudala Sangama? (Basavanna, SVS Vol. 1, v 349) (2003, C.R.Yaravintilimath & M.M.Kalburgi - page – 33)

Not only he identified himself with them but he also elevated their status by elevating Madara Cennayya's status. Basavanna says, Siva himself had dined in the house of untouchable the Madara Cennayya. In one of his vachanas he says:

'Did He not dine with Cennayya?' (Basavanna, SVS Vol 1, v 433)

Apart from this personal example, Basavanna and other vachanakaras also resorted to ridiculing, satirizing and also questioning the stand taken by Brahmins, Vedas and Sastras. They tried to prove that untouchable Sharanas are far superior to Brahmins who believe in themselves as superiors to others.

'He is a superior sage,

Who is engaged in the Linga – worship,

Though he be a Svapaca,

He is lower than a Svapaca,

Who does not worship the Linga,

Though he be a Brahmin' (Basavanna, SVS Vol 1, v 605) (2003, C.R.Yaravintilimath & M.M.Kalburgi – page – 38)

The ridicule of Brahmana and praising of untouchables in one and the same vachana is another strategy followed by vachanakaras to stress the need for eradication of untouchability in their group.

What a pity it is!

Because they know Thee not

They have grass in their hands!

Because they will not bow to Thee

They have a noose round their neck!

What use is washing and rinsing in the sacred waters?

What use is holding the nose and dipping in the stream?

In what stream did Tanner Kakkayya dip?

Among Kudala Sanga's devotees. (Basavanna, SVS, Vol 1, V 588) (2003, C.R.Yaravintilimath & M.M.Kalburgi, page – 89)

Basavanna and vachanakaras tried to create equality of untouchables along with all other Sharanas in their community. Apart from the untouchable community members, many other lower community people joined the

movement in considerable numbers. But, this community grew as time passed and also changed according to the times. At the beginning, it assembled as a small group, grew into a community, then into a sect and a caste and finally into a religion. In the course of 800 years from 12th to 21st century, it influenced and also is influenced by the larger society. The conventions, customs and culture have its own hold on the life of the people in larger society. Some groups of untouchables might have completely mingled into the community of Lingayats without any trace of its origin and became one of the higher castes within the Hindu fold. Some slipped back and some other continued to be linga wearing untouchables. In the 20th century, a kind of revival of Veerasaivism/Lingaitism by Swamijis of the community has been taking place. Some of the Swamijis have taken it to their heart to address the issue of untouchability on the lines of vachanakaras though there is considerable opposition from its own fold. Because of the efforts of the vachanakaras, the issue of untouchability and its eradication is kept alive to this day.

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8

Self-Representations of Dalit Woman in Oral Narratives

—Dr. Saraswathi K.B.

Main stream Representations and Subaltern Representations of Dalit woman does not mean Self-representations of Dalit woman. Why are Self-Representations important?

The upper caste patriarchal constructs have attempted to fix the functions of a dalit woman and her desire to her position/status of pollution in the Hindu religious order. Her feminine power is often nullified in the pretext of satisfying individual and collective needs of the community. Her desire is forbidden by caste laws and civil laws that reflect caste society. Ethically or unethically, her desire is censored or repressed because of her caste position. Her social roles and desires are juxtaposed to suit private and public spheres.

Lucy Irigarary[1] in her article 'The bodily encounter with the mother' observes that the mother is denied her generative power; by wanting to be the sole creator, the Father superimposes upon the archaic world of the flesh a universe of language (langue) and symbols which cannot take root in it except as in the form of that which makes a hole in the bellies of women and in the site of their identity. Dalit women have tolerated the definition of their place in caste society based on the sacrifice of their bodily dignity and have endured it as non-active bystanders.

As Lucy Irigarary points out, "The fertility of the earth is sacrificed to delineate the cultural horizon of the father tongue (langue) (wrongly termed the mother tongue). But

that is never talked about. A hole in the texture of language corresponds to the forgetting of the scar of the navel." As she further argues how women's womb came to be feared, "The womb, unthought in its place of the first sojourn in which we become bodies, is fantasized by many men to be a devouring mouth, a cloaca or anal and urethral outfall, a phallic threat, at best reproductive. And in the absence of valid representations of female sexuality, this womb merges with woman's sex as a whole. There are no words to talk about it, except those which are filthy, mutilating words. The corresponding effects will therefore be anxiety, phobia, disgust, a haunting fear of castration."

'Feminism affirms women's point of view by revealing, criticizing and examining its impossibility.'(Catherine A. Mackinnon: 1981) It is important as a researcher to recover, articulate, and elaborate positive expressions of Dalit women's point of view, of celebrating the survival of this point of view in spite of the formidable caste forces that have been ranged against it. As Showalter has noted, feminist criticism of women's writing proposes to articulate woman's difference: What does it mean for a woman to express herself in writing? How does a woman write as a woman? Feminist criticism has inquired into the correlative process of reading: What does it mean for a woman to read without condemning herself to the position of the other? What does it mean for a woman, reading as a woman, to read literature written by a woman writing as a woman?

Catherine Rochefort in her article, 'The Privilege of Consciousness', says, "I consider women's literature as a specific category, not because of biology, but because it is, in a sense, the literature of the colonized." The Theory of Culture incorporates ideas about woman's body, its language, and its psyche but interprets them in relation to the social contexts in which they occur. The ways in which women conceptualize their bodies and their sexual and reproductive functions are intricately linked to their

cultural environments. The female psyche can be studied as the product or construction of cultural forces. Language, too, comes into the picture, as we consider the social dimensions and determinants of language use, the shaping of linguistic behavior and cultural ideals. A cultural theory acknowledges that there are important differences between women as writers, their class, race, nationality, and history being the literary determinants as significant as gender.[2]

Hypotheses of women's culture have been developed over the last decade primarily by anthropologists, sociologists, and social historians in order to get away from masculine systems, hierarchies, and values and to get at the primary and self-defined nature of female cultural experience.

Gerda Lerner explains the importance of examining women's experience in its own terms: "Women have been left out of history not because of the evil conspiracies of men in general or because of the male historians in particular, but because we have considered history only in male-centered terms. We have missed women and their activities, because we have asked questions of history which are inappropriate to women. To rectify this, and to light up areas of historical darkness, we must, for a time, focus on a woman-centered inquiry, considering the possibility of the existence of a female culture within the general culture shared by men and women. History must include an account of the female experience over time and should include the development of feminist consciousness as an essential aspect of women's past. This is the primary task of the inquiry into women's history. The central question it raises is: What would history be like if it were seen through the eyes of women and ordered by the values they define?" In defining female culture, historians distinguish between the roles, activities, tastes, and behaviors prescribed and considered appropriate for women and those activities, behaviors, and functions actually generated out of women's lives.

Taking this argument further, Dalit feminism challenges the upper caste systems of knowledge about feminist understandings of women and 'seeks to create a project of inquiry and interrogation that will better inform feminist projects that speak to and for these subjects (Spivak, 1990, pp 62-63). The scholarship thus engages with feminist projects, especially those of liberalism, that fetishise the Dalit woman, treating her as an object of study of something to be rescued and rehabilitated by the feminist mission. Sexuality continues to be an important site of struggle over claims to cultural authenticity, the definition of Indian national identity, and the role of women within the state and its culture.

Dalit Feminism also challenges upper caste feminists who continue to reinforce the divides between 'us' and 'them', constantly scrambling to secure an 'authentic' primordial identity to distinguish their positions from western feminism. "Efforts to naturalize boundaries and distinctions produce mythical differences that have informed the political and legal strategies of feminists and others in the postcolonial context. Boundaries must be engaged as sites of historicized struggle, where differences are deconstructed and knowledge is produced about shifting identities and multiple subjectivities that are neither essentialized nor universalized" (Gandhi, 1998; Loomba, 1998). There is a need to avoid slipping into a 'native' or 'authentic' feminist position of culturally relativist knowledge production, which serves only to erase or marginalize the heterogeneity of the others. (Ratna Kapur: ibid 5) As a part of an effort to reconstruct history, memories of caste experiences related to untouchable practices, attitudes and behaviors of upper castes that marginalize the lower castes as the 'Other' and inflict domination over them are recorded by Dalit men/women. These writings record past experiences and indicate seeds of future dreams.

In recent years there has been considerable critique of the hegemonic generalizations about women that result from essentialism (Spelman, 1998). In the postcolonial context, Spivak has addressed some of the problems of essentialism in the work of the subaltern historians, who are attempting to recuperate the voices of the marginalized subject. She has argued that the 'subaltern cannot speak' and that subaltern historians are erecting a native subject with an authentic voice (Spivak, 1988, p 296; Spivak and Rooney, 1994, p 151). She challenges the essentialism that is inherent in such a position.

Dalit movements are silent and have failed to encompass women's movements. The question before us is has 'Dalit' identity engulfed women identity? How has dalit movement interfaced with man-woman inequality and patriarchal perspectives? When an organization like DSS treaded towards political power, a wide silence looms large over the women's question. Their identity as dalit women is assembled within the norms of dalit community and they fail to burst out of the oppressive structure to establish their self-identity. "Within the wide frame of 'Dalit' there are diverse castes, economic stratas, social and cultural differentiations and discriminations and sexual inequalities which are not efficiently dealt with"[3].

Dalit Patriarchy and Dalit women writing

Kancha Ilaiah in his essay, 'Why I am not a Hindu' (1996) points out that the man-woman relationship in dalit bahujan families is markedly different. The possession or non-possession of material resources, in particular, in the form of property makes for fundamental differences between lower caste women and upper caste women. Since the lower castes by and large do not own property, all dalit families have to labour; this includes women and even children. These in-built structures, according to Ilaiah, shape the manner in which dalit women are thoroughly

integrated into labour systems and have a strong work ethic.

Upper caste women on the other hand have no function outside reproduction – and are thus reduced to the single axis of providing sexual labour. Their domestic management is crucial for the maintenance of purity norms and the avoidance of pollution, essential for sustaining upper caste status. Their household labour is grueling but is not recognized as productive labour. Ilaiah argues that what is required to end the oppressions of the caste system is that all castes, upper and lower, should be dalitized.

Other dalit male thinkers have also argued that women are less oppressed within the dalit castes because there is less of the burden of the pativrata ideology among dalit women who do not regard their husbands as 'honoured' beings who must be respected at all times. (Chakravarti 2003: 87-88)Such codes of maintaining a discreet silence, no matter what is happening inside the family, do not have the same bearing among dalit women. Patriarchies do exist among the dalit castes and dalit women do struggle against them.

The Dalit Mahila Sanghatana has criticized the persistence of 'Manuvadi Sanskriti' in the Dalit male who otherwise traces his lineage to a Phule-Ambedkarite ideology. To quote Jupaka Subhadra (2004: 294),

"Dalit literature, while talking about caste, didn't talk about women's reality. They talked of the oppression women faced outside but did not talk of the oppression that they faced at home. They claim that dalit women experience a democratic patriarchy – which means they can carry as many stones of mountains as they choose! (Laughs) They can enjoy their status as workers! What about their vulnerability in every quarter? What of their unending labour? It is these gaps that I wanted to fill through my writing. Isn't it strange – feminist groups and upper caste

women can at least hear us, but dalit men can't hear us at all. They don't listen to us. They are so satisfied with the democratic icing on their patriarchy, the sugar coating that they refuse to listen to. They ask, "Are you not a laborer working in the fields? Why should we heed you?" but I come from there. My mother and my sister are labourers. That is my social reality. I have been troubled by the way women are vulgarized in movements, how they are seen as the cause for splits in the Party. Not ideology but sex is seen as the cause. The men are idealized while the women are abused... if I touched a mud pot accidentally it would be smashed. Was I lower than a dog? It is all of this that I try to sort out in my writing, while keeping my language and staying true to my own culture."

Women are prevented from speaking of a world free from pain, violence exploitation; and while 'upper' caste women are censored in the interests of tradition and culture, 'lower' caste women are censored in the cause of caste identity. "Dalit women writers are subjected to several levels of oppression which operate as agents of censorship: poverty, lack of access to education, exposure to a wider world and, finally, the control of their own community.[4]

Pradnya Lokhande, writing in Marathi, speaks of how Dalit writers find it difficult to expose patriarchal attitudes within Dalit society and in the movement. Praised and encouraged when they speak about caste and class oppression they are accused of disloyalty and betrayal when they speak about patriarchy that operates within the community. "If your sari catches fire can you take it off in public?" is a popular saying in certain Dalit circles, demonstrating the pervasive and absolute hegemony of patriarchy. Brahmanical notions of modesty and honour which are criticized and attacked by Dalit men in all other matters are adopted uncritically and totally with regard to women. (ibid: 18)

A woman writing of poverty, caste and social oppression is accepted and applauded. Attempts to raise

patriarchal attitudes, democratic functioning and subjective experiences within caste groups are discouraged, corrected and punished. Carving out a space for her creativity within these boundaries is one of the greatest challenges a dalit woman writer faces.

Autobiographical narratives by Dalit women challenge the upper caste historical, cultural and political contexts as a site of discursive struggle, exposing their oppression, exclusion, subjugation as well as contradiction and struggle. In the process, attention is paid to political and theoretical constructions of the cultural authenticity and dalit women's subjectivity. We should also be aware of who speaks for whom, how and why, as well as who is listening, to whom and to what end if we have to understand the politics of Gender. Dalit feminism attempts to expose the imperial and essentialist assumptions of dalit women and culture. It also challenges attempts to universalize women's experiences primarily along the lines of gender, which perpetuate the exclusions that have been the hallmark of universalizing strategies.[5] It is these sites of identity in the space of Oral Narratives of Dalit women that are explored in this paper to delineate the scars of Caste and Patriarchy on Dalit women's writing.

Folk Studies and Dalit women writing

By 1970s Folk Studies that recognized Oral narratives by dalit communities based on folk literature became popular. There was an increasing concern among scholars that folk literature may lose its nativity in the growing trend of modernization of Dalits and women. At the same time minds and value systems that accepted caste and gender discrimination refused to accept this new change. "In folk narratives we see the diverse faces of women. They have offered their life as sacrifice to various ideals and are acclaimed idols standing for the pride of Karnataka." (Nagarathna B.S 1978:31) The studies of folk feminists

during this period constructed women in folk literature in line with male specific models and even further in the eighties they articulated their thoughts in traditional lines.

The first generation of upper caste women as a result of belated exposure to education and lack of courage to question established family systems and also because of their traditional socialization were not able to expose the threads of exploitation in folk studies[6]. In the later part of the eighties the songs of Devdasis came to be a part of folk feminist literature. In the eighties scholarly studies of neglected communities were in full swing. Dalit thinking was emerging. As a result of all this the songs of Devdasis emerged in an edited form. It was in the Eighties that the culture of dramatic performers (patharadavaru) was deteriorating. The songs of upper and middle caste women were collected as songs of chaste women (Garathi), and the songs of patharadavaru was collected as songs of Devdasis.

By 1970s folk studies became part of university education and by late 80s the songs of Devdasis broke the concept of songs of chaste women. Such deconstructions enlarged the scope of Women folklore literature. In the Nineties gender related studies were seriously extended to all arenas of knowledge including folklore. This does not mean that gender equality was attained. Even in the post-modern context many traditional minds are projecting patriarchal values as specific to culture. Many collections of folk songs by women and their related critique are influenced by patriarchal thought.

The Seminar held in Hyderabad in the December of 1988 on 'Woman and Folklore' intensified the focus on studying folklore from a feminist perspective. The words of Peter.J.Class (1999 pp 185-186) clearly states its objectives of the workshop, – this workshop is the first of its kind at the international level. It is an attempt to train women folklore scholars from minority groups to undertake field survey programmes, focus their attention on folklore of women and

lay emphasize on building up field survey methods in per formative studies mainly in urban areas." This workshop had a deep impact on folklore practitioners of Kannada. It encouraged women from minority communities to embark on field surveys to study folklore.

A re-reading of folk stories, folk songs, narratives and myths from a feminist perspective began in the late eighties. Rebuilding women history based on matriarchal culture and highlighting fertility myths that denied male constructions of pollution and women's sexuality as impure, gained prominence. Brahmanism projects whatever it proposes as true. It has created ideological illusions that are sincerely replicated among the lower castes. To deconstruct the life values of dalit women is risky because they directly clash with both upper caste brahmanical ideology and Dalit patriarchal systems.

Purushothama Bilimale recognizes the need for alternative language, methods and concepts to deconstruct the meaning of women folklore. To analyse feminist power sources they have to do so from a feminist perspective. *'Mahila Janapada'* of Mogalli Ganesh shows affinity in adapting folklore feminist perspective in facing challenges of modern world. He asserts that woman is the creator of culture and believes that it is always pro-life. Male-centered religious meanings have crept into cultural spheres and have deformed them. To erase these distortions it is imperative to listen to the voices of native women. Hi.shi. Ramachandregowda differentiates women folklore at two levels, Sanskritised folklore and Cultural folklore. The first has Vedic women as its centre and analyses the process of her objectification and her construction from a consumerist perspective, the second centers on non-Vedic women, that has constructed women as a source of power striking popular notions of helplessness associated with her. Dalit poet Siddalingaiah's study of *Tutelary deities* of villages is a folklore study that constructs history of women from a matriarchal standpoint. Folklore

analysts observe that opportunities for low caste and tribal women to live with the man they like or to remarry (termed as Kudike) with the death of her husband are more compared to upper caste women. But related simplifications based on such practices which declared that Dalit women as liberated fail to comprehend the subtle constructions of exploitation in caste hierarchies.

Since 1970s, Feminist scholarship has been driven by the desire to redefine culture from the perspective of women through the retrieval and inclusion of women's work, stories and artifacts. This period has also seen an exploration of literary and cultural production by women in numerous languages and cultures. This endeavor in itself has shaped much of the cultural memory of the late 20th century. For instance, feminist writing on sexual abuse and violence against women has been intensely pre-occupied with memory, trauma and transmission in the family and in society. Debates on recovered memory have divided feminists throughout the 1990s. Feminist readings of autobiographies, memoirs, and feminist practices of oral history have struggled to define the gendered manifestations of these literary genres and have thus analyzed gender differentiations in acts of personal and cultural memory.

Oral Narratives of Dalit women

Excerpts from *Talaparagi*[7] and *Karnataka Devadasis*[8]

Talaparagi or 'Ever flowing spring of water' is a record of the narrations of Dalit men and women from diverse economic strata and classes of dalit society. For the purpose of study I have selected an autobiographical narrative and oral narratives of two folk singers. I have tried to lock into the narratives of these Dalit women to understand their perception of caste and the treatment they are subjected to in society.

Memory[9] is both public and private, both individual and cultural. The self is shaped by it, and so it conveys or represents the same, its group history and identity. Memory is firmly situated in the present yet looks toward the future: it is the encounter between the 'self' of the individual and the space that resonates with history.

The Dalit woman writer becomes a retrospective witness who opens the door to her caste and its associated history of past humiliation and oppression. She projects herself into the space of the past, a space that was full of memories that were also inscribed onto her own body, thus assuming their burdens. Allowing her own bodily boundaries to decalence, she offers herself as an agent of memorial transmission. How do the old and new worlds of constructions of gender collide in this space of dalit transition in contemporary times? How does the role of the female witness or agent of transmission differ from that of her male counterpart? How does the body and bodily memory of the dalit woman represent itself and how is our reading of the dalit women image contrary to the upper caste constructs?

These Oral self narratives of Dalit women are taken from *Talaparige and* Chennanna Walikar's Study of *Karnataka Devadasis*. The Dalit women chosen for representation are from diverse fields of activity. Sobanne Honnamma and Tamburi Rajamma are folk singers. Selected interviews include Narratives of unnamed Jogathi[10], Devadasi[11], Basavi[12] and Pataradavalu[13].

Memoirs of Sobbane Honnamma and Tamburi Rajamma: Folk Singers

Dalit women as singers have played magnificent role in protecting and propagating oral folk songs that has enriched our rich culture. As artists they have a rare commitment and adoration for their art and as humans, benevolence

unsurpassed. In their Memoirs they have shared their experiences about caste. The Memoirs of this dalit woman artist address some glaring issues that make them suffer because of caste. Her understanding of caste atrocities related to inter-caste marriages and her commitment to the purpose of promoting her learned art is praiseworthy.

Sobane Honnamma: *Beg and eat but invite and share*

Caste discrimination works in many spheres. For dalit women caste oppression is severe because they are denied the basic means for survival. When they are refused access to water because they do not agree to do traditional occupations, like cleaning the toilets of upper castes, scavenging and working in farms imposed by caste system they are left with no other alternative except to yolk to the caste imposed slavery. Sometimes they had to beat drum free of cost because the upper castes think that providing opportunity to serve god in itself is a great thing. With urbanization and modern facilities like tap water system and employment opportunities other than the traditional fixed ones, caste oppression is reduced to some extent.

Sobbane Honnamma feels that the poor have great power of sustainability because of their poverty. She is neither greatly worried about her low status but accepts it as part of life and bears with tolerance. No matter how great the difficulties she has to face because of caste she is happy with singing and is blessed to be a part of the oral education.

Tamburi Rajamma: *Imarried him inspite of knowing that he was a Holeya*

Intercaste marriages challenge the caste system and hence the persons involved in it have to face severe threatnings from caste people. For instance when Tamburi Rajamma married Madappa, a low caste Holeya, her brothers and sisters forced her to leave her husband and come back

to their caste. But for Rajamma, castes are imaginary creations, the product of male egos. She feels that there are only two castes; male and female. She married Madappa because of his humanity and because she valued the art in him. She questions if people marry outside caste won't they bear children? So caste constructs are not natural but man made. She boldly asserts that she married Madappa on her own will and she is happy with him. She strongly disapproves the advice of the villagers to return back to caste and threatens to commit suicide if they force to do what she does not wish to. The narrative fills us with pride for the bold stance she takes not only against patriarchy but also against caste forces.

Excerpts from Interviews with Devadasis

In his detailed life study of the Devadasis, Chennana Walikar records without any hesitation the double standards of brahmanical patriarchal society since Vedic ages to the present times. In the name of religion these communities have become deserts of pain and frustration and I have attempted to translate some of their narrations to record their voices of protest and their silenced throb.

These narratives of Devadasis expose the trap dalit women are subjected to. In his book, Oh you Hindu awake Dr. Radha Kamal Chattarjee (1993:39) summarises: "The Devadasi system was set up, according to a Times of India report (10-11-87) as a result of a conspiracy between the feudal class and the priests (the Brahmins). The latter, with their ideological and religious hold over the peasants and craftsman, devised a means that gave prostitution their religious sanction. The poor, low class Hindu girls, initially sold at private auctions, were later dedicated to the temples. They were then initiated into prostitution. Even to this day this religious prostitution blessed by Hindu religion is still alive in Karnataka and Maharastra." (Chennanna Walikar 2001:605).

The oral narratives of dalit women as dancers and practitioners of religious prostitution fill us with agony and deep disgust for practices that are forcefully heaped on them. Renavva is a Jogathi to Godesses Chunchuramapura and in her conversation to Chennana Walikar says that she has understood the fact that goddesses is in no way related to her fate. It is all determined by the upper caste men. But she is helpless now with no one to support her. Her helplessness and the fact that she is aware of the cause of her agony increase her tragedy.

For Ellamma a Basavi of Benakanahalli, Bidar Dt the very custom of Jogathi is evil and she feels that it must end with her. She has no one to shelter or care for her. She depends on begging for her survival. She narrates that she was forced to become basavi by the Gouda of the village who was lured by her beauty and bribed the priest to declare her as basavi.

An unnamed Jogathi of Savadathi Ellemma temple of Belagavi Dist narrates that she was offered as Jogathi to mother goddesses to ward of poverty by her parents. But the poverty has not ended. She feels that such evil customs will not prevent poverty but instead one should earn, gain and be happy. She feels that her position itself has decided her fate. She continues to beg and will die one day.

The Narrative of Anandasani a Pataradavalu describes minutely how women of her class were treated by the upper caste men. When she wished to get her daughters married off, the caste men took away her daughters by tieing up her to a post. They selected the most beautiful from among her girls to be taken to Hubli where they were to undergo the rituals of becoming sex workers in the name of religion. She dreamt of marrying her children so that they lead a life of respect and honour like all other women. But caste forces are adamant to retain heinous cultural practices that exploit women in the name of religion. It was fixed by custom that these women must learn music, dance and

provide sex services to upper caste men. They were also provided some amount of land.

For Anandasani, the very concept of god and religion is a bundle of lies constructed by the dominant castes to their benefit. Such abstract concepts are mere guises that permit the upper castes to satisfy their carnal desires. Though she has a husband and her children has a father, he is not to be addressed so because public declaration of such relationships are a threat to his honour. It is to protect his honour that these women are to suffer. Anandasani is not only against the Mamaledara, Gowda and Kulakarni but also against the priest who normally belongs to lower caste.

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10. She is a devotee of goddesses Ellemma. She is not a prostitute, but sleeps with men only if she wishes. She is adept in singing, dancing and playing instruments. She belongs to lower castes and is not allowed to marry. She has no house or property, but

happy if anyone feeds or gets her money to drink. It is a complete nomadic life.

11. viii Jogan Shankar(1990) in his study of Devadasi cult defines Devadasis thus, "The female dancers and singers attached to temple are generally referred to by the term 'Devadasi' which literally means female servants of the diety. They are not allowed to marry any mortal man and their dedication of temple service is considered as constituting a marriage with the diety." He further points out that Devadasi system is a deliberately created custom in order to exploit lower caste people in India by upper castes and class.

(a) The upper castes have influenced the establishment of an order of prostitutes who are licenced to carry on their profession under the protective shield of religion.

(b) The establishment of such system facilitates them the access to low caste women to fulfill their carnal desire.

(c) The setting up of such a system can destroy the lower castes sense of self respect in the society.

12. The term Basavi refers to the feminine form of Basava a bull which roams the village at will without any restriction. Hence Basavi alludes to the foot loose position of the women. After Aryan invasion of the South, Sanskritised culture and Brahmanic ethos also diffused in all aspects of Dravidian culture and religion. As a result Basavi of Jogati system crushed the dravadian religions, customs dedication to a diety. For instance, Yellamma, originally a Dravidian Godess was super imposed by an Aryan System of devadasi. (Chennana Walikar 2001: 155) She belongs to the lower castes. They are not selected, but parents offer them to serve god.

13. She belongs to the middle caste like kumbara, gangamatha and, nayaka. She offers music and dance service in the houses of temples of upper caste men. She can have sex relation with one or two of the upper caste men. Art is her essence. The one who is tied with a 'Ganda' is pataradavalu. They are economically stable and are kept away from the institution of marriage. Offering service to god is hereditary. They have a matriarchal origin and they are partial nomads. (Chennana Walikar 2001: 461).

9

Contesting Caste: Dalit Assertion and Discourse

—Dr. Shamala Ratnakar

The term *'caste'* used to describe a system of social relations that is considered to be uniquely Indian and that preassembly distinguishes the traditional Indian society from the West, is ironically not of Indian Origin. As is well known, the term comes from the Spanish word caste, meaning race. The Portuguese seafarers, who arrived on the west coast of India for trade in the 15th Century, were the first ones to use it in the Indian context. In the popular understanding, Caste is an ancient institution of the Hindus, based on the ideas of Varna, Karma and dharma pronounced in a text called the Manusmriti. These idea translated into a hierarchical society, structured around the notions of purity and pollution. The Varna system divided the Hindus into four mutually exclusive categories the Brahmanis, the Kshatriyas, the Vaishyas, and the Shudras. Beyond the four varnas were the achhoots (the untouchables). These four or five categories occupied different positions in the status hierarchy, with the Brahmins at the top, followed by the other three varnas in the order mentioned above, with the achhoots occupying a position at the very bottom.

Caste, according to this 'text book' view was a pan – Indian social system with little or no variety across regions. It also remained virtually unchanged over centuries, from the times of its origin in the ancient past up to the British colonial rule, when the colonial state

introduced a fundamentally different social and economic regime- with the process of westernization / modernization, unleashed during the colonial period and accelerated by the Indian State after its independence in 1947, the spread of 'secular' education and the growing influence of urban culture caused caste to gradually decline. Caste, it is argued, would have nearly disappeared by now had the wily politicians not mobilsed the 'primordial sentiments' of the common people for their narrow political and electoral gains. Indian's modernization or the associated processes of development, democratic governance and secularization are all superficial, the essential realities of caste, inequality and social exclusion, largely survive. Caste continues to survive in some form or the other in present day India is enough to establish that nothing worth while has changed in the underlying ideological structure of the Hindu Mind. The structure of caste has close ties with other social, economic and political systems, such as Kinship, power regimes, and labour relations.

Varied explanations of caste system in Hinduism are on debate. Many Indian scholars have also written with this kind of concerned vein. G.S.Ghurye, who explores six segmental division of caste.

Segmental division of society: Castes were groups with well developed life styles of their own. The membership of the groups was determined by birth and not by choice. The status of a person depended not on the amount of wealth he possessed but on the rank that his caste enjoyed in the Hindu Society.

Hierarchy: There was a definite scheme of social precedence amongst castes. Each groups occupied a specific status in the overall framework of hierarchy.

Restrictions on social intercourse: The Hindu Society had minute rules about social relations. For eg. It imposed restrictions on what sort of food or drink the members of one caste could accept from the members of another caste.

Civil and religious disabilities and privileges: Segregation of individual castes or groups of castes in the village was the most obvious mark of civil privilages and disabilities. Certain sacraments could not be performed by any case other than the Brahmins. Similarly, Shudras and other lower castes were not allowed to read to learn the sacred scriptures.

Restricted choice of occupation: Generally, each caste considered a particular occupation as its legitimate calling. To abandon the hereditary occupation in pursuit of another, even when it was more lucrative, was not considered right.

Restrictions on Marriage: Caste groups observed strict endogamy. Members of a caste group married only within their castes. However, there were a few exceptions. In some regions of India, the upper caste man could marry a low caste woman, an alliance known in kinship studies as hypergamy.

But, caste, which is viewed from 'below', the most critical feature of caste is the experience of untouchability. The line of pollution which divided the 'Untouchables' from the rest, has been historically a critical point of distinction. The idea of the 'line of pollution' has also been an important category in the official discourse on caste. In most cases it was used as the boundary line for identifying the 'scheduled castes' and for institutionalising policies of affirmative action for their 'welfare'. This administrative classification and grouping of different caste communities has, over the years began to shape the popular notions of caste and caste-related distinctions in social and political life. Today, the experience or reality of untouchability had indeed been a fact of life. However, its construction and acceptance by the colonial state and the nationalist policies completely changed the discourse on caste and it has had far-reaching implications for the way caste come to be understood, and for the way the state was to engage with

it. This conceptual shift continues to play a critical role in contemporary India.

A large volume of historical and anthropological research shows that, notwithstanding the claims of ideological consensus, those located at the lower end of the hierarchy did not always accept their position in the caste system as a natural consequence of their past Karma. They often attributed it to the manipulations and deceitful action of others. In other words, sanskritization was not the only mode through which groups in the social order would have changed their position in the caste hierarchy, political and material struggles would have also played their role. Similarily, changing economic and demographic realities would have also influenced the social order of caste.

Interestingly, the protest movements and contestation of caste invariably appeared in religious forms. Perhaps the first major movement against the caste system was the rise of Buddhism in ancient times. Gautama Buddha, the founder of Buddhism. Underlined the unity of humankind. He professed that all human beings, irrespective of caste and creed have a common predicament of life and face dukha (suffering). Buddha proposed an eightfold path to salvation. He also rejuvenated and reorganized the prevailing social and religious system by denouncing the ritual sacrifice and priesthood of Brahmins and laid stress on the individual's own efforts to achieve nirvana [salvation] [Keer cited in Ghuman 2011:12-13] contrary to the Brahmanism of his time, 'the Buddha taught the essential equality of the possibilities of liberation available to all' [Klostermaier cited in Ibid: 13]. The Buddhist ideology not only acquired popularity but it also became a state religion in ancient India under rulers like King Ashoka. It was from the Indian soil the Buddism travelled to different parts of Asia. However for various historical reasons, its influence declined in India after being an important faith in the region for several centuries. The order of caste and

the supremacy of the Brahmin were challenged again during the so-called medieval times by the saint poets like Kabir, Ravidas, and Nanak among many others. Some of these saints such as Ravidas and Kabir [Lele 1981: Lorenzen 1987] are believed to have themselves come from communities located close to the bottom of the traditional caste hierarchy. Many thinkers too criticised Brahmanical orthodoxy and advocated universal values of equality and dignity. God, they advocated, did not create distinctions of caste. Neither did he like the ritualism advocated by the Brahmins. Some of their hymns directly attack Brahmins and Brahmanical ideology. The English translation of one of the hymns by Kabir is quite explicit about this;

- Pandit, look in your heart for knowledge
- Tell me where untouchability
- Came from, since you believe in it,
- We eat by touching
- We wash by touching, from a touch
- The would was born.
- So, who's untouched? Asks Kabir
- Only he
- Who has no taint of Maya
- And
- It's all one skin and bone
- One piss and shit
- One blood, one meat
- From one drop, a universe
- Who's Brahmin? Who's Shudra? [*as in Ghuman 2011:14*]

Similarly, Ravidas, who too was born in a 'low' – caste chamar family near the town of Banaras in present

day Uttar Pradesh, constructed a nation of Utopia where everyone was treated equally and fairly. His Hymn 'Begumpura', imagines of a city without sorrows, 'where there will be no distress, no tax, no restriction from going and coming, no fear'. It's English Translation goes like this:

- The regal realm with the sorrow less name:
- They call it Begumpura,
- A place with no pain,
- No taxes or cares,
- Nor own property there
- No wrongdoing, worry, terror or torture
- Oh my brother
- I have come to take it as my own
- My distant home,
- Where everything is right
- That imperial Kingdom is rich and secure
- Where none are third or second- all are one;
- Its food and drink are famous,
- And those who live there
- dwell in satisfaction and in wealth
- They do this or that,
- They walk where they wish
- They stroll through fabled places unchallenged
- Oh says Ravidas, a tanner now set free,
- Those who much beside me are my friends

Another poet from this tradition, Karma Mela, a Mahar Dalit and son of the 14th Century Saint poet Choka Mela of Maharashtra, articulated his angst against caste in even stronger words

- You made us impure
- I don't know why Lord
- We've eaten leftovers all our life
- Doesn't that trouble you
- Our house stocked with rice and yogurt
- How do you refuse it
- Chokha's Karma Mela asks
- Why did you give me birth?
- [*as in Mendelssohn and vicziany 2000:24*]

The saint poets like Ravidas and Kabir attracted a large following. An evidence of the influence of their writings is the fact that the sikh Gurus included their writings in the holy book they were compiling during the 16th and 17th centuries. During the 1970's and 1980's, the activists began to reinvent some of these writings and symbolisms to inspire many in contemporary Dalit movements [*see Jodhka 2009: Omvedt 2008*].

The rise of Dalit consciousness and their efforts to break away from the traditional social order was rarely easy or a simple affair. Dalit assertions have, almost everywhere, invoked violence and atrocities against them [*Omvedt 1995:73*] professional sociologists have often observed that though the practical of untouchability began to slowly decline during the post Independence period, atrocities against Dalits have been rising [*Beteille 2000: Shah 2000*] In the emerging scenario, the Dalit movements also began to change their Orientation and focus, from religious conversions to civil rights and seeking citizenship status.

Perhaps the first important movement in this category was the formation of the Dalit panthers during the early 1970's. It was in 1972 that a group of young Dalits, mostly writers and poets came together in Bombay [Mumbai] under

the name of Dalit panthers. However, this movement was not confined to Maharashtra alone. As atrocities began to be reported from different parts of the country. So did the news of new forms of Dalit organizations and protests. Its larger context has been well articulated by Gail Omvedt in the following words:

> It was a period in which atrocities against Dalits in the villages, often of brutal and horrifying forms, seemed on the increase. Whatsoever its form in each region, a new movement was enveloping most of the country [1995:73-4].

Unlike the earlier movements that looked at Indian society and its caste system as being culturally unique, Dalit panthers drew parallels between caste and race and compared themselves with the Blacks. Even the name of their organization suggests that they were inspired by the Black Panther movement of the United State (Joshi 1986). They were perhaps the first ones to articulate the caste question in the language of rights.

This shift was also enabled by the change in the wider context. Thanks to the official policy of quotas or reservations for SC's, a new educated and urban middle class began to emerge from within the Dalit communities. By the early 1980's their absolute numbers had become quite substantial spread across urban centres of the country. Their articulation of the caste question also reflected their experience of working in urban settings, in government offices along with members of upper castes. Many of them initially tried to assimilate in the mainstream middle- class life. However, they soon realized that it was not very easy to get away from their caste identity.

These middle-class Dalits started forming separate groups and unions of their own. They also formed Dalit cultural groups and study circles. It was from these initiatives that a broader Dalit identity began to be articulated at the national level and new social and political movements of Dalits began to emerge in different parts of

the country [*Zelliot 2001: Shah 2001: Hardt Mann 2009*]. It is this new brand of Dalit activist which is carrying forward the agenda of Dalit rights. As Hardtmann writes: *'The Dalit movement has grown tremendously all over India since the beginning of 1990's. Today, its networks are spread across the globe, including Dalit activists in the diaspora' 2009:xii*).

Globalisation has a very specific value for Dalit politics and mobilizations. From inward looking reforms and sanskritization, Dalit movements have moved to a global stage where they compare themselves with other groups and communities that experience discrimination because of their descent, ethnicity, colour, and race. This has also given them new alliances and platforms for articulating their grievance and winning support / alliances. These wider processes, however do not mean that there are no ground level mobilizations of Dalits, or that untouchability or caste atrocities can be fought without engaging with the local level realities. However, the local is no longer isolated from the global.

The processes of globalisation and articulation of the Dalit question in global forums or by the Dalit diaspora in the west and by international development actors, influence, and shape local level articulations of the caste question and Dalit rights. These are important questions that need to be well researched and well argued. Dalit movements are not movements of the past, they are ongoing and emerging processes. Thus the contemporary caste discourse emerges as need of the hour which has grown over years taking different dimensions.

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10

English Teacher: Then and Now

—Dr. Vijayakumar M. Boratti and
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I

This paper is about a comparative study of colonial and post-colonial English teacher. Acquiring higher education and becoming an English teacher are not the same through generations. Meaning, attitude, perspective, orientation, experiences and societal viewpoints of/about English teachers have undergone changes over decades. English teacher no longer belongs to single community now (earlier predominantly Brahmins). He/she is from other backward and dalit communities too. Due to reservation policies pursued by the government, at present, large number, if not all, of teachers belonging to the subaltern sections are turning to English. How has creative writing articulated this turn? In other words, how has creative literature addressed the question of 'being English teacher'? What are the changes we notice in 'English teacher'? The present paper addresses this question by studying what is it to be an English teacher in colonial and post-colonial periods is. As a testimony to our argument, we have taken up R.K. Narayan's English novel *The English Teacher* (1945, henceforth TET), a Kannada short story "Nanna Inglish Vritti" (2011, *My English Profession*, henceforth MEP) and Shanta Naik's poem "Let us not talk about the past" (2012,

LUNTAP)[2] to understand how both English teacher and his articulations express the notion of "being an English teacher".

II

Since colonial period in India, English teacher at graduation or post-graduation level is generally perceived to be well-versed in English literature and language. English teacher carries the extra-burden of sophistication, civilized behavior and well-read personality. He/she is expected to perpetuate the legacy of the British culture and civilization whose shadow cast influence on the Indians during colonial period. However, a comparison of TET with post-colonial English teacher indicates the changing or changed contours of an English teacher. Yet, each of these three creates dissimilar concerns with a precision. While TET is said to be autobiographical, MEP is biographical. LUNTAP depicts the predicament of a subaltern English teacher vis-à-vis the new generation. They emerge from totally disparate cultural contexts (a Brahmin protagonist's retreat into spiritualism (TET); a subaltern's struggle for survival in the English department (MEP) and an English teacher's desperate attempt to apprise his son of his struggles in the past life (LUNTAP). They are all written in different languages—English and Kannada—one the dominant global language of our time, and the other confined to a region. LUNTAP, though first written in Kannada, attempts to transcend regional base and tries to reach out to many through translation. While TET shares larger nationalist discourse of critic of English education and literature, MEP and LUNTAP prove to be an "aberration" in negotiating with the available space of English and living with it. The present paper would like to speculate on the historical and other factors that contribute to the totally dissimilar treatment of these events and reflect on the nature of concerns that inform each text.

Colonial English Teacher

Most of the English teachers in the colonial period were middle class, Brahmins. Despite being the first to benefit from English education, there also arose a section of Indian intellectuals who, under the influence of nationalism, began questioning "civilizing" mission of English literature and its claims of transcendence. R.K. Narayan belongs to this section of intellectuals. His novel *The English Teacher* is a case in point.

As an English teacher at Albert Mission College, Krishnan has led a monotonous lifestyle despite studying in the world of English literature and being an English teacher. But this took a turn when his wife, Susila, and their child, Leela, come to live with him. In their company, he understands that there's more meaning to life than to just teaching in the college. But suddenly life takes a different turn when Susila contracts typhoid and eventually passes away. Krishnan, destroyed by her loss, has suicidal thoughts but gives them up for the sake of his daughter. But after he receives a letter from a stranger who indicates that Susila has been in contact with him and that she wants to communicate with Krishnan, he becomes more collected and cheerful. This leads to Krishnan's journey in search of enlightenment, with the stranger acting as a medium to Susila in the spiritual world. Krishnan gets to learn through the Headmaster of his daughter, Leela, the journey to enlightenment; eventually learning to communicate to Susila on his own, thus concluding the entire story itself, with the quote that he felt 'a moment of rare immutable joy'.

Krishnan develops antipathy to the general qualities of an English teacher in the colonial period. Being the second generation literate and well-positioned to satirise, his thoughts and experiences in life pitch themselves against the general notion of English studies as theological "passion generating a self-consuming frenzy and transcending all

material reality" (G.N.Devy, 1997: 161)[3]. There are many remarks which are directed at the hollow-crown of English literature and language. On the path of self-development and spirituality (rooted in Indian ethos), Krishnan constantly thinks that English language or history of English literature does not help him realize anything. They do not promote self-understanding in any manner. He considers literary analysis, histories or theories as "dead mutton" (p.178)[4]. Further he believes that as English teachers they are creating literary garbage out of students and they are part of garbage called English department (p.150)[5]. No longer able to continue in the college and desperate to find out "our roots" (p. 179)[6], Krishnan resigns from the post and joins a children's school to experience new lease of life, bliss and divinity.

Krishnan is well-positioned to resign as he is not bothered about losing the money he gets from his position of English teacher by means of monthly salary. He says to Brown, the principal of Albert Mission College (where Krishnan works), "I have no use for money. I have no family. My child is being looked after by others and they have provided for her future too. I have a few savings. I have no use for a hundred rupees a month. . ." (p. 180)[7]. R.K. Narayan's favorite concern of quest for Indian spirituality and critique of English education runs through this novel elaborately. He seems to be the product of his times when larger section of middle class, English educated "secular" Brahmins were in a luxurious position to give up their dreary government job and journey in quest of spirituality and self-development.

Post-colonial English Teacher

English teacher in the post-colonial period belongs to subaltern section. What we mean by subaltern section is weaker social sections mostly from urban, semi-urban and rural areas. And most of them belong to dalit sections.

Access to English education and literature has been possible for this dalit through government policy of reservation whose genesis can be traced to B.R. Ambedkar's forceful emphasis on reservation for dalits in government jobs and education to alleviate the problems of social discrimination. Allied to this access to education is also a gradual growth of dalit identity and awareness of his/predicament in the world of English still dominated by upper class, caste people. Access to English education and English literature for these sections is a key to material life and prosperity. The above mentioned short story "My English Profession"[8] depicts this picture succinctly.

The short story is a biographical-fiction. Professing to represent the above subaltern sections, the story revolves around a character called Kendaganna Swamy and his struggles in English department. Swamy is a rural, Kannada medium, black complexioned and first generation literate. Fatherless, Swamy's mother brings him up with great difficulty by earning through 'Coolie'. Brought up in poverty and unable to pay hefty fees, Swamy achieves graduation and post-graduation in English in government colleges. The intention of doing M.A. in English was to get a job. Swamy's troubles as a post-graduate in English begin at a very early stage. In an interview for English position in a prestigious private college in Bangalore, Swamy feels humiliated as he is "exposed" to be lacking in recent courses introduced in English department like Gender studies, subaltern English literature, literature of the blacks, etc. The interview panel is reluctant to give him job on the grounds of lack of fluent English. But the timely intervention of a government representative to oversee the interview proceedings helps Swamy get the job on the grounds of highest marks compared to other candidates. As soon as he joins the department, Swamy learns that his life in the college will be full of troubles. First of all, English grammar class is dumped on him as other English teachers, predominantly Brahmins, refuse to engage grammar

classes. Swamy finds English classes almost empty as the students prove to be indifferent to grammar classes. This is seen as failure of Swamy to attract the students to his classes by his colleagues. The students are also hostile to Swamy. In one of the classes, a student, apparently the son of the principal, asks an embarrassing question to Swamy. But the question pricks Swamy's conscience as it is directed at Swamy's family background without father. On several occasions, the principal questions Swamy's method of handling classes and students and very conveniently he spares other English teachers even though they too are unpopular with the students who are largely English-medium students. On such an occasion, the principal orders the suspension of Swamy from the services as he punished some errant students in the class whose parents happened to be part of the college management. Swamy questions his suspension and succeeds in getting back to the department. Years roll on. Swamy slowly becomes a popular English teacher among students who share similar social background as that of Swamy but still unpopular among the English-medium, upper class, urban students. Swamy's popularity owes much to his hard work, studies and his knowledge about the English courses introduced in the college. Meahwhile, Swamy obtains Ph.D. degree subaltern English literature. Despite this, Swamy faces a new challenge now. The college management is reluctant to give him career promotion even though he is eligible for it. Swamy now readies himself to face this new challenge despite being advised by his friends to leave the college and join some other one.

English Teacher's Confrontation with New Generation

Shanta Naik's poem is an example of a subaltern English teacher's predicament of carrying struggle-ridden past and at the same time, confronting new challenges about it vis-à-vis his own son. Belonging to Lambani community (a

scheduled caste in Karnataka), Shanta Naik in the poem recounts his struggle to come up in life. The recounting happens in an imagined dialogue with his son. As the poem progresses, the poet finds himself at loss to convince his son that the former's life was not a bed of roses and he had to struggle to get through several stages of life in attaining the current social and economic position. But the son, who is now a second generation literate among the Lambanis and who is studying in an English medium school, shows indifference to listen to his father's tale of woes. The poet recounts, "My son says with authority; Let us not talk about the past". The son finds it embarrassing and humiliating to listen to his father's "shameful" life. Being a new generation literate, the son does not have time or interest to his own past.

The Subaltern World in comparison with Krishnan

Kendaganna Swamy and the poet offer a totally contrastive picture to R.K. Narayan's Krishnan. Unlike Krishnan, Swamy is the first generation literate and the first to become English teacher in his family. Krishnan's audacity to abandon English literature and grammar cannot be imagined in case of Swamy who finds himself entangled in the whirl of intellectual discrimination. He struggles to come out of it successfully. He does not enjoy the luxury of abandoning his job like Krishnan in pursuit of spirituality. He has to spend his life in understanding the systematic discrimination meted out to him by the college management and negotiating with it for his survival. While Krishnan takes a flight to transcend material, mundane English world, Swamy is forced to stay in stifling circumstances. While Krishnan is least concerned to excel in English literature and history as he discovers it as alienating, Swamy becomes more and more attached to it because he has the burden of proving his worth and knowledge to his colleagues and students. The poet, on the other hand, has to continuously talk about his past and teach his son

about the difficult ways of life. Though the poet is proud of overcoming the difficulties in attaining a respectable status as an English teacher, he also feels sad that his past life is nothing to his son who is now enjoying the benefits of his father's struggle. The son symbolizes the second generation literate who does not want to experience social stigma owing to his father's social background. Thus, while, R.K. Narayan represents the anti-colonial nationalist discourse through his novel, the short story and the poem represent a post-colonial English teacher's predicament of survival and confrontation with changing values respectively.

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ENDNOTES

1 She is a devotee of goddesses Ellemma. She is not a prostitute, but sleeps with men only if she wishes. She is adept in singing, dancing and playing instruments. She belongs to lower castes and is not allowed to marry. She has no house or property, but happy if anyone feeds or gets her money to drink. It is a complete nomadic life.

2 Jogan Shankar(1990) in his study of Devadasi cult defines Devadasis thus, "The female dancers and singers attached to temple are generally referred to by the term 'Devadasi' which literally means female servants of the diety. They are not al-

lowed to marry any mortal man and their dedication of temple service is considered as constituting a marriage with the diety." He further points out that Devadasi system is a deliberately created custom in order to exploit lower caste people in India by upper castes and class.

(a) The upper castes have influenced the establishment of an order of prostitutes who are licenced to carry on their profession under the protective shield of religion.

(b) The establishment of such system facilitates them the access to low caste women to fulfill their carnal desire.

(c) The setting up of such a system can destroy the lower castes sense of self respect in the society.

3 The term Basavi refers to the feminine form of Basava a bull which roams the village at will without any restriction. Hence Basavi alludes to the foot loose position of the women. After Aryan invasion of the South, Sanskritised culture and Brahmanic ethos also diffused in all aspects of Dravidian culture and religion. As a result Basavi of Jogati system crushed the dravadian religions, customs dedication to a diety. For instance, Yellamma, originally a Dravidian Godess was super imposed by an Aryan System of devadasi. (Chennana Walikar 2001:155) She belongs to the lower castes. They are not selected, but parents offer them to serve god.

4 She belongs to the middle caste like kumbara, gangamatha and, nayaka. She offers music and dance service in the houses of temples of upper caste men. She can have sex relation with one or two of the upper caste men. Art is her essence. The one who is tied with a 'Ganda' is pataradavalu. They are economically stable and are kept away from the institution of marriage. Offering service to god is hereditary. They have a matriarchal origin and they are partial nomads. (Chennana Walikar 2001: 461).

11

Dalit Drudgery and Redeeming Pains in Marathi Dalit Short Stories

—Dr. B.O.Satyanarayana Reddy

In the pre-independent India, Dalits had to do the same kind of menial work, irrespective of their interest or disinterest, without any protest for centuries together. Though they were aware of their drudgery and ill-treatment by the people of other sections of society, they silently suffered and took their state and status for granted in a resigned way. But the fortunate things that have changed their lives are the British Rule in India, the introduction of English education, the proselatyzing activities of Christian Missionaries and Western free thinking with the popular concepts like 'Equality', 'Liberty', and 'Fraternity'. Though the Dalits have got many favourable trends and situations to get rid of their age-old drudgery, getting free from the oppressing and exploiting system was not so easy for them. They had to put up hard fight against the power systems of society and also they had to make self-sacrifices and had to endure many agonizing situations in life. In the present paper an attempt is made to highlight the pains and pangs born by Dalits and expressed by the Dalit writers which are likely to provide an awareness of the miserable past of Dalits to themselves and to others. The reason for selecting the Marathi short stories is the Dalit movement has taken great momentum in Maharashtra with the great leaders like Mahatma Jyotiba Phule and Dr. B.R. Ambedkar.

Therefore more awareness of Dalit troubles can be known in Marathi short stories.

The story "The Poisoned Bread" written by Bandhumadhav depicts the turmoils, taunts and rages faced by the Dalits from upper caste people in the process of transformation. Yetalya, a Dalit goes along with his grandson to Bapu Patil's land to prepare the threshing floor and do threshing work and to beg his share of grain. But Bapu Patil confuting Yetalya's statement "I am your begging Mahar and feel proud to be so"[1] reminds him the ongoing changes in Dalit's lives and so he tauntingly says that there is no need for him to beg for share:

> Don't give me that line, you're no longer the Mahar- Manga of the good old days, to beg for your share of the corn. You are now Harijans! You've even started claiming equality, so I was told, eating and drinking with us at the city hotels. So, there remains absolutely no difference between us, does there? Now that you're our peers, tell me, why do you still beg for a share of the corn? (PB168)

But Yetalya quoting God and religion tries to defend himself: "How could you say that, Anna? This Yetalya is certainly not one of those claiming equality. How can one, in that case, account for God's creating religion and the castes?"(PB168). At this self-defence of Yetalya, Patil immediately enlists the evil-effects of their profaning religion. Of course, in India the concept of God and religion are interpreted by various people in various ways,for their own benefits, threatening and sometimes creating fear in others:

> Come on, don't you know that the rain-god got enraged because you---the Mahars and Mangs---have profaned religion, and abandoning caste, have defied Lord Vithoba of Pandharapur. How else can you account for the drying up of the Chandrabhaga river? Bapu Patil added insult to injury (PB168).

At this unjust accusation of Bapu Patil, Yetalya's grandson retorts in a befitting way with logical reasoning:

> 'Patil, will you kindly tell me what you meant when you accused us of forgetting religion, abandoning our caste and of polluting the God? And if a religion can't tolerate one human being, what is the use of such a religion? And if our mere touch pollutes the Gods, why were the Mahars and Mangs created at all? And who, may I know, who indeed, created them? And would you please tell me the name of the god whom the Mahars and Mangs can claim as their own?' (PB168).

Bapu Patil, at the impudent questioning of Yetalya's grandson, flies into rage. Yetalya, observing Patil, becomes panic and so he seeks Patil's forgiveness explaining: "He's my eldest daughter's son, from Sangalwadi. He's too young to know how to speak to his elders. He's city-bred and has learnt to read and write" (PB169). Now Patil is rather pacified and explains them how they have to be in their limits while dealing with the people in society:

> Need he be so impertinent just because he knows how read and write? And mind you, even if a Mahar or Mang gets educated, no one will ever call him a Brahmin. A Mahar is a Mahar even if he passes L.L.B. and becomes a barrister. One should always keep to one's own position (PB169).

Patil's reminding Yetalya to maintain positions makes Yetalya's grandson angry. He, in a challenging way, asks Patil: "what's this "position" you're talking about, Patil? And whose position?" (PB169). Though Patil is again enraged at the rude behaviour of Mhadeva, Yetalya's grandson, thinking that he is ignorant, Patil tries in a logical way to explain and educate the boy:

> Patil exploded: Look here, boy! Simply because you've had a little education, don't think you can teach me. You should know that God intended to have a definite hierarchy when he created the Brahmin, the Maratha, the fisherman, the weaver, the Mahar-Mang, the Dhor and the cobbler in that order. Everyone must abide by this scheme and act accordingly. Put every man in his proper place, as they wisely say. A *chappal* is never worshipped in place of God, is it? (PB169).

Mhadeva does not agree the system of society and the rules of society to be followed in the fear of God as

Patil interprets. He also makes his own claim using the knowledge and reasoning he has acquired through the education. He claims equality with Patil making use of equal logical reasoning and at the same time retorting him suitably:

> I was determined to give tit-for-tat. 'So you think you can treat us like your footwear! But are we really like that? Aren't we also made of the same flesh and blood as the rest of you? We too are born after nine months in our mother's womb. Isn't it logical then?' I ended rhetorically, that basically there's hardly any difference between us?' (PB169).

Yetalya, in this bizarre situation falls on the feet of Patil and begs him for work. Patil gives them work and warn them to finish the work before he returns from home after getting his breakfast. But when Patil goes away, Yetalya entrusting the work to his grandson, goes to another Patil's field to request the share there. So, when Bapu Patil comes back, he becomes angry at not finding Yetalya there. Then Mhadeva gives him explanation: "He's gone to Gyanba Patil's farm to fetch a tripod," (PB171). Patil is not satisfied with this explanation. He becomes quite angry and speaks in humiliating terms to show his mastery and thereby to keep them under control with high handedness: "At that Bapu Patil was extremely furious and started abusing Grandpa in the most humiliating terms: 'Has he gone to fetch the tripod or to whore with his wife.? (PB171).

Mhadeva could not bear the affronting words of Bapu Patil. He answers bacok soon: 'Why do you abuse him? Grandpa will be here soon' (PB171). Patil could tolerate no more Mhadev's daring to answer back without keeping quiet by swallowing the insult which his elders were doing for ages together. He speaks in a sarcastic way: "So you don't want me to abuse your grandfather. Should I then touch his feet?' And turning to Tuka Magdoom he said, 'I've been watching this chap since morning. This brat of a Mahar has been rudely answering me back'" (B171).

As a result of this altercation between Patil and Mhadev, after completing all the work given, Bapu Patil gives Yetalya neither share nor any meagre amount of grain for the work done that day at least. Generally, in olden days in villages, the Mahars and other workmen were given the grain only yearly once, for the work done for the whole year, at the time of harvest. Yetalya, having worked for the whole day for Patil, gets disappointed at his inhuman rejection and so before leaving the threshing floor, collects the pieces of bread thrown to the oxen:

> But after we had toiled throughout the day Bapu Patil did not give Grandpa even a few measures of jowar. Grandpa was crestfallen. As we dejectedly left the threshing floor, however, Grandpa could not fail to notice the pen where stale, rancid pieces of bread lay scattered on the ground in front of the oxen. It's rightly said that as the Chamar has his eye on the *chappal,* so does the Mahar on stale bread. Files were swarming over the mouldering crumbs which had turned green and foul (PB171-172).

On the way back home, Yetalya shares with his grandson his concerns and doubts regarding their opposing the upper caste people. Though he could not understand in the beginning anything about what his grandson says, after his detailed explanation, he supports and encourages his grandson to go ahead on his chosen path for the saek of all the community people. By the time they go home, the dogs wait outside for food and so Yetalya throws the pieces of bread he brings to the dogs but his wife, who has also been waiting for them expecting that they would bring something to prepare food for that night observing they have brought nothing else except the pieces of bread, immediately comes out and collects the same pieces from dogs. Yetalya before reaching home asks Mhadeva: "Finally breaking the it (silence), Grandpa said, ' The landlord got angry with me because of you, Mhadeva. I had thought that having toiled the whole day we would get a larger measure of corn. Now, what shall we have for the supper?' (PB172).

As Mhadeva could not offer right reason to the punishment given by Bapu Patil because of his seemingly rude behaviour but which is a right way of getting out of their age long humiliating situation, in a fit of resigned and helpless state says:

> 'We'll gulp down the crumbs you collected. Haven't we got these rotten pieces as a reward for labouring all day long? A good exchange indeed! Are we any better than cats or dogs? Through a few crumbs at us and we are happy,' (PB172).

Grandma after collecting the pieces of bread cleans the mud and mixes them with *dulli* and cooks them for supper. They eat their night food and go to sleep. But the very next day itself Yetalya falls sick. They call the doctor and the doctor diagnoses that the cause for Yetalya's sickness is the stale pieces of bread which turn to be poisonous. Though he is given treatment, he can not recover. Before closing his eyes once for all, he tells his grandson:

> 'Mhadeva, don't weep, my boy. I'm an old thing now. And being so old, I may stop breathing any moment. What can I say to you now? I can only say: never depend on the age-old bread associated with our caste. Get as much education as you can. Take away this accursed bread from the mouths of the Mahars. This poisonous bread will finally kill the very humanness of man (PB174).

Thus the story 'The Poisoned Bread' reveals the price paid by Yetalya and his grandson for seeking freedom and claiming equality in the background of the changing things in the lives of Dalits.

Similarly, the story, 'The Storeyed House", depicts the price paid by the protagonist, Bayaji, for seeking freedom in fulfilling his life ambition of providing his family an enviable storeyed house to accommodate the big family of his sons and their children. He fails to understand the practical problem of inviting the envy of the powerful upper caste people.

Bayaji works for thirty five years in Bombay in dockyard. After his retirement, he plans to get back to his

native village and lead his life happily and peacefully with children and grand children. But, ironically, on the way home soon after getting down from the bus in his village, he meets Bhujaba and receives his ire for just greeting in a different way forgetting the age-old way of a Mahar greeting an upper caste person. In a casual but affectionate way "Greetings to you, sir, how are things with you?"[2]. The formal and traditional way of greeting that Bayaji forgets is: "My humble salutations to you, sir, who are my father and mother"(SH177). For violating this traditional practice of greeting, Bayaji receives the immediate anger and admonition from Bhujaba: "Do you think you can become a Brahmin merely by saying "Greetings"? Can you forget your position simply because you've turned Buddhist?" (SH177). Though Bayaji feels insulted ans angry at Bhujaba's remark, he does not react emotionally because he has to spend his further life there itself. So, he controls himself: " Bayaji was nonplussed. For a moment, he was tempted to knock him down with his box but realised that he couldn't afford to do so. So he said in a meek tone, 'Sir, why spring this on me even before I set foot on the soil of my forefathers? I have to stay here till the end of my life" (SH177). Bhujaba, insistently, enquires how much money Bayaji has brought on his retirement. He says it is "some two and half a thousand rupees" (SH178).

At home Bayaji asks his children what they want from him and they would like him to do, but the children are not ready to demand anything from him. Unlike the children of modern days, they do not ask him to give them money with selfish desire. Bayaji's eldest son asks his father: "'Neither we nor our wives want anything. Tell us what you'd like us to do' (SH179). At this readiness of the children to do anything for father sake, Bayaji responds affectionately:

> 'Look children, ours is such a large family. Even at mealtime, we've to eat by turns or sit crowded, knocking our knees together. I wish to build a house out of my earnings, and it has

> to be a Storeyed house; the usual three-portioned house won't be adequate for us'(SH179).

According to father's wish and plan, children begin the work of building a storeyed house on an auspicious day. They give construction work on contract to Dattaram Vadar. While the work had been in progress, one day Bayaji meets Kondiba Patil. He comes there with the hidden purpose of serving an indirect warning and ultimatum to Bayaji to stop the work of constructing a Storeyed house. It is because a Dalit is not generally supposed to have a house equal to the upper caste people. He passes his caution:

> 'Baiju, you shouldn't lose your head simply because you've set aside some money. Do you aspire to an equal status with us by building this house? The poor should remain content with their cottage, understand?' Kondiba remarked rather sharply (SH180).

Bayaji is stunned at this unexpected remark from Kondiba Patil. He does not expect this reaction from Patil. So, in a nervous and humble way, ignorantly tries to explain his real intention of building a Storeyed house: "No Patil, please don't misunderstand me. Bayaji was a little dizzy with nervousness. I only wish to build a shelter for my family. Then I shall be free to breathe my last" (SH180). Then Patil as if giving a good piece of advice or rather well wishing plan suggests the alterations to the house:

> 'Who says you shouldn't have a house? You can have a small house with three convenient portions, a veranda in the front and at the back and the living section in the middle. Why spend unnecessarily on a Storeyed house?' Patil gave his counsel (SH180).

Bayaji was astonished at this suggestion. He feels weak to answer. In a low voice, he tries to give explanation further: 'No, but 'Bayaji faltered (SH180). Now Patil, finally, gives him an indirect threat of the consequences to be faced if he does not change his plan:'"You may go in for a storeyed house only if you don't wish to stay in this

village. I hope you know what I mean.' Kondiba shot out as a warning and walked away. Other ruffians in the village threatened Bayaji in a similar manner" (SH180).

Bayaji, now, has no other way to get his desired plan of a storeyed house executed. So, he makes alteration to the existing plan in such a way that he gets it built connected to the kitchen but it can not be noticed as a storeyed house from outside:

> The middle portion was a little elevated and a small first storey fixed up there with wooden flooring. This part could be reached by stairs rising from the kitchen. No one could guess from the outside that there was a first storey to the house. Bayaji had to make the best of things (SH180).

The house construction was completed as soon as possible. The house warming ceremony was arranged. All the relatives from other villages come. Programmes like bhajans were arranged. Kondiba and Bhujaba also attend the function not with good intentions but just to examine the house. Bayaji not knowing their hidden intentions extends warm welcome innocently and happily shows them the entire house. After showing them the house, he respectfully offers them betel leaves. But Patil not accepting them speaks in a sarcastic way: "It's enough that your offering is honoured" (SH181). During the night time bhajans were performed singing songs in praise of God. Besides, inspirational talks were given to follow Bhimraya and Buddha to get freedom from their miserable state. When songs and bhajans were in full swing, all of a sudden, the new house catches fire. Bayaji becomes frantic and appears like a mad person:

> He ran around crying, 'My house, my Storeyed house! It's on fire. My enemy has taken revenge on me.' He entered the roaring flames, crying, 'My house, my house.' He climbed up, pulled the pictures of Buddha and Babasaheb from the walls and hurled them down. As he was about to come down the stairs, it crumbled down. As he was about to come down the stairs, it crumbled down in flames (SH182).

All possible efforts were made by people around to extinguish the fire and save the people. But it is of no use. The dream house of Bayaji turns to ashes within no time:

> Bayaji was burnt all over. He was still wailing, 'My house, my house!' Bayaji's children encircled him and cried their hearts out. The guests were busy putting out the fire. All Bayaji's hopes had been reduced to ashes. What was the use of putting out the fire now? (SH183).

When Bayaji was about to take his last breathe his sons ask: "Nana, what's your last wish?" (SH183). He says: "Sons, I want you to build a Storeyed house. I've no other wish" (SH183). The secret attack of upper caste people on Bayaji's family through setting fire to his house reveals "two clearly identifiable patterns emerge. The first is related to the notion of justice in village society. The second is a consequence of the efforts made by Dalits to secure new rights which the traditional society refuses to concede."[3]

Bayaji's death makes his children courageous and so they are now strongly determined to build the Storeyed house according to their father's wish giving no care to Kondiba Patil, Bhujaba and other caste people. Bayaji's son's firm decision also proves the fact of life "Politics teaches us live, not die"[4].

In the above two stories, it has been observed that how a Dalit is treated in an insulting way by a caste Hindu. But here is a story, *Promotion,* where we can learn the kind of problems experienced by a Dalit, who is promoted in his job, from his subordinates and also the treatment meted out by one educated and employed Dalit to other Dalits who are uneducated but live in a slum.

Waghmare has been promoted in his job. He becomes an officer. His subordinate, Godbole, is not ready to digest the fact that he is senior to Waghmare but he is not given promotion. So, he does not cooperate with him. He flatly and boldly says that he does not prepare the proposal

which was actually to be done by another employee who is on leave. Even if Waghmare requests him to do the work, he says flat on his face: "You can report me if you like. I have told you a thousand times that it is not my job"[5].

Waghmare can not do any thing about Godbole. He does not have courage to report the matter to the higher authorities as he threatens Godbole. He calls his another Dalit colleague, Awale Saheb and shares with him his problem. He says: "you are a timid bugger. Why don't you go ahead and issue him a memo instead of whining like this. Remember no one has obliged you by promoting you in the reserved category"(PM192). Though Awale Saheb tries to support him morally, Waghmare does not follow his advice. The conversation between Awale and Waghmare more bring out the existing situation of reservation and its consequences which are yet to be understood properly:

> "Does Godbole respect you?"
>
> 'He doesn't. And I suppose it's quite natural that he should resent the fact that I've been promoted to the post of Assistant Purchase Officer, though I'm junior to him'.
>
> 'Listen, it's only now that we are being promoted to the 'Saheb' positions in this 33% category. But remember these other people have enjoyed the privilege of being in the 100%reserved category for centuries. Doesn't that mean anything to you? (PM192).

The inability of showing power over Godbole might have made him at least to keep up a dignified life style at home. One day, while Waghmare's wife was watching T.V. along with kids, Waghmare joins them to watch a Marathi movie. Then comes a "shabbily-dressed woman, accompanied by two equally unkempt children" (PM195). After the film was over, when they go out Waghmare enquires his wife "Who was that woman?" (PM195). She says: "She is my aunt. She lives in the slum opposite our quarters" (PM195). In a taunting way Waghmare asks his wife, Kusum: "You seem to have specially invited them.

Why didn't you receive them in grand style? (PM195). Further conversation between them reveals the attitude of Waghmare towards his own community people, just because of their being uneducated, though they are related to him from wife's side. His apathy towards them makes his wife hurt. But she does not reveal it:

> 'I'll tell you what happened. I met her when I was going to the market. She was always so good to me. She didn't know I lived here. I had met her after ages'
>
> 'Come, don't get carried away. We don't live in the B. D. D. chawls. Next, you'll have the slum visiting you---what will our neighbours say?'
>
> 'Well, are they going to rob you?'
>
> 'Don't talk too much. Learn to maintain your status. After all, you're an officer's wife.'
>
> Kusum burst into tears. She thought of her poor aunt who had loved her so much. She recalled being fondled and fussed over by this aunt. She wondered when she had come to Bombay. Her aunt was so near, yet (PM195).

The story, promotion, thus brings out the mind sets of the employed Dalits.

The three stories typically represent the pitiable conditions that Dalits were in and the stiff opposition and self-sacrifice they had to make to get out of their drudgery seeking freedom. The protagonists of the first two stories lay down their lives not knowing that they have to pay so much value of their lives for fostering the dreams of redemption. The stories discussed in this paper provide proper understanding about Dalit's situation in society.

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12

The 'Organic' and 'Ontological' Modes of Rebellion in 'Bharathipura' and 'Crossing Over'.

—Dr. H.B. Suresh

The institution of caste and its dehumanizing effect on the society has been a major theme in the world of Kannada creative fiction. As the majority of Kannada novelists committed themselves exclusively to social realism, the plight of Dalits has been a significant pre-occupation of these writers. By 'Realism', the Kannada novelists did not mean just a recording process, but as Raymond Williams points out:

> A practical interaction of what is personally seen, interpreted and organized and what can be socially recognized, known and formed is richly and subtly manifested.

'Bharathipura'(1973) by U.R. Anantha Murthy and 'Crossing Over'(1973) by S.L. Bhyrappa, are two important post colonial narratives dealing with Casteism and Society at cross roads. The two novels have striking similarities. They have the temple-entry issue as the focus and both the novels have socio-cultural dimensions. Being culturally sensitive, Anantha Murthy and Bhyrappa use temple-entry issue to interrogate tradition in the background of modernism and read the sociology of complexities of changes that are presently taking place in India. Jagannatha of 'Bharathipura'

and Mohanadasa of 'Crossing Over', project revolution to move the 'wheel of history'. While 'Bharathipura' projects 'Ontological' mode of rebellion, 'Crossing Over' projects the 'Organic' mode of rebellion.

Jagannantha, the central consciousness of the novel, is a western educated rich Brahmin Zamindar. A man of strong existentialist convictions, Jagannatha, returns to his native town Bharathipura after living in England for five years. In England, he realizes that his life away from 'home' is meaningless. He understands that he has led a life which is a self-deceptive and hypocritical one. His introspection and musings bring to light his own intellectual deception. There is a strong desire in him to engage in action commitment and make his life authentic and meaningful.

But back in Bharathipura he finds life hollow, futile, disgusting and decadent. In the name of Lord Manjunatha, the Brahmin land owners exploited the Dalits and promptly collected their tenancy money. Jagannatha understands how Lord Manjunatha is 'Institutionalized' and 'legitimized' in the most brazen way to serve the selfish motives of a few.

Jagannatha's stong desire for concrete action brings him closer to Dalits in the town. He can stir the sleeping town only by destroying the power and myth surrounding Lord Manjunataha. He decides that only when Dalits are taken into the temple the constructed power of the Lord will be annihilated.

The decision to take Dalits into the temple has another dimension. Jagannatha's quest for authenticity in life and Dalits temple-entry issue are interlinked. His decision to lead a group of Dalits into the temple is an 'Ontological' necessity to him. By engaging in this çoncrete action, he wants to authenticate himself and become 'solid', Dalits' temple entry is an existential must to him.

> "Their rebellion would bring him authenticity. He should struggle with their mind set. Also Fight Manjunatha. The self in him would Achieve a definite shape through their revolt." (75)

Jagannatha's decision to cleanse the town of its moral and spiritual decadence does not stem from an altruistic concern but from his selfish motive of becoming 'solid' through such activities. Jagannatha's failure has its seed in its very motive.

The most discussed and the controversial part of the novel which has given rise to multiple interpretations, is the final drama of the narrative. Jagannatha on the full moon festival day leads a group of Dalit youths to the temple. The Dalit youth are inebriated, obviously, to overcome their fear and anxiety. The Manjunatha lingam is not seen in the sanctum sanctorum and Dalits are denied the opportunity of God's 'darshanam'. The Lingam is removed and thrown into water by Ganesha, the Priest's son, as an act of personal revenge against his father. The anxious mob heaves a sigh of relief because their God is not polluted. The mob believes that Bootharaya, through Ganesha, protected Manjunatha from any possible defilement. Ganesha's rebellion is 'Organic', what he does to the Lingam of Lord Manjunatha is purely a neurotic action of hatred against his father. The destruction of God is not an abstract spiritual need but a necessity for his quotidian existence. Ironically, the way people perceive and interpret this 'Organic' mode of rebellion nullifies Jagannatha's 'OntologicaP rebellion. For the established religious system, the central drama is a happy ending. Lord Manjunatha is not defiled and he cannot be defiled, which further strengthens people's awe and veneration of Him. For Jagannatha, the central drama is a disastrous one because it re-establishes, rather strongly, the very belief he sets out to destroy. The act of revolution becomes a 'ritual' for strengthening the very belief the revolution wanted to destroy.

The concluding sentence of the narrative:

Adiga was describing to Chikki, preparations that were going on in order to reinstall Lord Manjunatha at the

temple [222]- gives enough indication about the proposed reinstallation of the image of God in the temple, which in other words, echoes the reinstatement and continuation of the traditional order of Bharathipura. The narrative seems to suggest that the traditional value system, constructed by the Brahminic class, has an in-built mechanism to overcome the acts of rebellion.

It is interesting to note that Anantha Murthy calls himself a 'critical insider' in relation to Indian culture and his attitude to the West has been increasingly ambivalent. G.S.Amur makes an interesting observation:

> Anantha Murthy adopts the ideology of democratic Socialism of western origin, without hesitation. He is also attracted to the Indian spiritual and mystical traditions and is not prepared to write off myth and ritual as superstition. It is this ambivalence which separates him from other modernist writers of India and gives his work its distinctive character.

Rustum Bharucha commenting on this ambivalent stand remarks:

> Anantha Murthy is capable of blending his Critique of religion with a surrender to its Innate, revelatory qualities. In this context, His work is known to shift between a Scepticism nutured and a surrender to rituals And myths... In his work the light can reveal Darkness, and the anxiety to believe can get Transformed into belief.

'Crossing Over' by Bhyrappa depicts a culture, which is in the process of change and aptly represents the anxieties of individuals who are caught in the process of change. 'Crossing Over' like 'Bharathipura' presents an opposition between collectivistic social norms and the individual. There is a persistent demand for the recognition of the dignity of the individual in a society where established value systems is placed above the individual.

The novel presents two generations of Dalit leaders. Bettayya is the first generation Dalit leader and obviously a product of Gandhi-Congress ideology. Mohanadasa, the

son of Bettayya, is a volatile and seething cauldron. He is intolerant towards caste-Hindus and is a product of post-Ambedkarite era.

Bettayya, being an M.L.A., is economically and politically well-placed. But being a product of Gandhi-Congress ideology, he does not believe in corrective means but wishes to leave everything to time. Mohanadasa, the son of Bettayya, is contrasting in character to his father. He is educated and has a deep understanding of the hypocrisy of the upper castes. His intolerance towards the caste-Hindus is to be viewed in this context. He finally believes that unless Dalits resort to violence against caste-Hindus, they cannot get justice:

> We need to grab them and give them a good kick... The upper caste people. Unless they're stood upto, There is no chance they'll do the right thing. Look At the history of any country. This is the historical Truth. We must thrash them and rise in... That's the Only way of getting any justice. [409]

The novel has two temple entry episodes which are contrasting in nature. The first one is a sponsored entry, arranged by Melagiri Gowda, the Minister with an eye on the Dalit vote-bank. The second one takes place under the leadership of Mohanadasa and has wider implications. He considers Dalit's temple entry as culturally symbolic and socially significant. He is critical of the first temple entry and wants the present one to be decisive. Temples are symbols of material power and privilege. The desire to enter the temples also has an inherent dichotomy in it. Jagannatha and Mohanadasa are atheists, but they lead Dalits into the temple with fervent zeal. Jagannatha leads Dalits into the temple to destroy Lord Manjunatha, whereas, Mohanadasa leads them to claim the right denied to them for centuries. He even has plans to delitize the temples:

> We need to become priests. When we make our Procession with the holy light, those so called Upper caste people should stand there Respectfully. We should carry on our struggle Until we've got that far. [650]

Mohanadasa enters the temple, along with his followers: he looks at the image of God with contempt and wonders why his men have yearned for years to see that 'piece of stone'. Standing inside the temple, he feels disappointed and even defeated. He sees only the people of his community inside the temple. His dream is to make sure that his fellowmen stand with equal dignity along with caste-Hindus inside the temple. But his present venture has not accomplished it. He feels further bogged down when he sees his people, in total submission, pray to God to forgive their sins. He understands the paradox of his action. Instead of liberating his people, he has actually pushed them into a new kind of subjugation. His agitated mind is further weakened by this realization. In this chaotic state of mind he looks at God:

> As Mohanadasa stood staring at the Idol, he felt that darkness invading His eyes. His head was reeling. Before he could even sit down, he Had collapsed. [667]

The swooning of Mohanadasa inside the temple is a turning point in the novel and the incident is similar in its effects, to the disappearance of the Lingam in Bharathipura. His failure leaves a deep scar in his mind. He realizes that by entering temples, Dalits cannot claim equality. He blows up the embarkment ofthe reservoir with a dynamite and the gushing water destroys the temple structure. Ironically, Mohanadasa too swept away and killed by the sudden surge of water.

The two narratives deal with similar issues but arrive at contrasting conclusions. Bharathipura concludes with the news of preparation to install the Lingam of Lord Manjunatha, an obvious indication of re-establishment of religious orthodoxy. 'Crossing Over' concludes with the destruction of the temple and in its destruction lies the hope of the birth of an egalitarian society. The collapse of the temple assumes symbolic proportions. It denotes not only the collapse of the concrete structure but also the annihilation

of the hierarchical dimensions of the Hindus religion. God and temples stand for spiritual 'fascism' exercised against the Dalits and their obliteration signals the end of the regressive and reac' onary ideologies and the beginning of progressive thoughts. Mohanadasa succeeds in destroying the temple but he himself is washed away by the flood water. The narrative voice seems to suggest that change by itself is a painful process. The transitional phase will have its own anxieties and hiccups. The process of 'Crossing Over' is not completed, but it has begun. Mohanadasa by destroying the temple succeeds in crossing the barriers, but only to meet his end. The death of Mohanadasa is historically significant. There is new hope for the humiliated section. Unfortunately, the failure of Jagannatha in Bharathipura does not assume such historical proportions.

Mohanadasa is a rebel and a revolutionary. His is an 'Organic' mode of rebellion. Rebelling against the inhuman practices of caste system is an organic necessity to him. The two narratives have a common theme of challenging the system and critiquing casteism, but the difference in handling the theme is too conspicuous to be missed. The intellectual in Anantha Murthy is more active than the creative writer and precisely for this reason, the novel becomes 'cerebral' and 'a thesis novel'. 'Crossing Over' concentrates more on the theme and succeeds in anatomizing the socio-culrural dimensions of caste.

13

Marginalizing the 'Centre': A Reading of '*ODALALA*' by Devanura Mahadeva

—*Mrs.Anusha Bharath*

All social knowledge is relative in the sense that it is inextricable from its cultural and historical contexts and, especially from its embeddedness in the power relations of a society. Psychoanalytic language of a culture does not coincide with its anthropological, historical or philosophical counterparts although there may be some overlap between them.

The Dalit Literary genre constituting the indigenous category has many seminal works to its credit. Works are based upon bitter experiences caused due to societal structures that have been framed on the basis of various boundaries-a few that have been trespassed and a few more that need a broadened re-view. But carving the world into discrete mental entities, does not entail the recognition of natural distinctions so much as a process of interpretation.

Caste System is not a new phenomenon for us Indians. It is a centuries old concept that has been forced to changing colours to suit the distinctive mentalities of the authority in question- the authority being at the 'Centre'. Its discrimination based on descent and occupation results in the segregation of communities, including the stigmatization of some of these communities as 'untouchables' or 'pariahs', making them highly vulnerable to the most barbaric forms of physical, psychological and social violence. The

institution of caste and its dehumanizing effect on the society has been a major theme in the world of Kannada creative fiction. Critiquing of this institutionalized practice has been a major literary pre-occupation of the Dalit literary genre.

The desire to articulate the standpoint of the downtrodden is of course not new to Kannada literature. The 'Vachana Movement' of the 12 century is an attempt to write 'histories from below' or to recover the experiences of those who have been hitherto hidden from history.

Devanura Mahadeva as an insider, discards the note of confrontation in his writings and treads a different path by reducing caste-Hindu characters to objects of pity. . Drawing inspiration from "deep subjective experience", makes Mahadeva's writings a good example of social realism. The 'Self is a conglomeration of certain characteristics that subsequently become associated with cognitive constructs, either anticipatory for new experiences or reflective of past experiences, independent of the on-going physical experiences. What was painful to recall, what had been concealed in the memory is given expression. Such painful events can prove to be highly traumatic and fatal, hindering the very freedom that an individual enjoys. The victim's past resurfaces quite often, causing the mind to dabble with its own existence.

Devanura Mahadeva's novella, *'ODALALA'*, depicts the socioeconomic oppression and cultural subjugation of Dalits and marginalizes the 'Centre' in a subtle way. The primary factor of realizing one's basic needs can be observed here. Language which is an important means of empowerment plays an important role in deciphering the respectability of one's own dialect. Mahadeva by deliberately following the folk narrative style rejects the use of the standardized linguistic registers. Siddalingaiah, another important Dalit writer, commenting on the language and style of Mahadeva's writing observes:

> Mahadeva deliberately chooses the language of his community and rejects the refined language in usage. By using the dialect of his community, Mahadeva gives recognition and respectability to the language and dialect of his community. Language and dialects are means of empowerment for Mahadeva.

'ODALALA', though anti-caste in its philosophical thrust, it is devoid of the typical rage and fury of Dalit literature. It is the candour of his depiction of Dalit life in all its deprivations that brought a tone of immediacy to the problems of Dalits. The lower caste writers' negotiation of casteism generally has a note of confrontation while the upper caste writers' negotiation of the same is generally informed by a note of compassion. But Mahadeva discords the note of confrontation in his writing and treads a different path by reducing caste-Hindu characters to objects of pity. The ethos of the portrayal of life is not informed by anger and agony but by a celebration of the joys of life and its possibilities, which includes the will to change.

The novella in question has an archetypal character as its protagonist. Sakavva, the main character is a possessive, caring and quarrelsome woman. The story begins with her search for the lost rooster. Her search is insignificant to others. But Sakavva experiences tremendous agony and resembles an empress who has lost her kingdom. Sakavva does not retrieve her lost rooster, but loses one more at the end as the Police take away another of her rooster. The agent of justice commits an act of injustice in the process of executing justice. The ironic close of the novella, not recovering the lost one but losing yet another, is a permanent feature of the fatalism associated with the under-privileged.

Another instance where the rootedness of the community is made known, is in the symbolic depiction of the 'dancing peacocks'. Puttagauri begins to draw the peacocks from its legs and then proceeds to complete the full picture. Shivu, Gauri's nephew, who is taken aback by this reversal, questions his aunt:

> O aunty! Whoever starts drawing it from the legs first? to which Gauri replies: You be quiet, my dear, until I draw.

When the Police ransack the house in order to search for the stolen goods, it is the drawing of the 'dancing peacocks' that remain unaffected by the happenings around them, proving that 'creativity' comes naturally to the Dalits and externalities can never affect them.

Hence, by their mere defiance, Sakavva and the members of her family disarm the Police and reduce them to despair. The Police representing the 'Centre' who enter Sakavva's hut to find the thief and the stolen goods, become helpless and are themselves transformed into objects of pity and this transformation reaches its logical end when the Police metamorphose into thieves as they take away another of Sakavva's rooster in the end. Without projecting any external violence, the narrative completes the victory of Dalits against the system which also brings out their inner strength to survive ad continue against all odds. Rightly so, U.R.Ananthamurthy describes this victory as a 'spiritual triumph'. It is indeed 'spiritual' because the victory is achieved not by violence, but by a soothing celebration of 'human dignity' and 'human possibilities'.

Thus without spitting fire and rage against upper castes, Devanura Mahadeva effectively marginalizes the 'Centre' by strategically centering the 'Peripheral'.

14

Suffering as Motif: Protagonists' Quest for Identity in Mulk Raj Anand's *Untouchable* and Chaduranga's *Vaishakha*

—D.R. Komala

I

The Independence Movement in India ushered in an ambience for creative writing. It provided a fertile soil for imaginative and realistic fiction. The sociological imagination with a compassionate focus on the subaltern and marginalized social groups was foregrounded as an option. Against this backdrop Mulk Raj Anand (1905-2004), an outstanding novelist of Indian writing in English known for his depiction of the fate of marginalized poor, and Subramanya Raje Urs (1916-1988), popularly known as Chaduranga, an ace Kannada novelist and progressive writer hailing from a remote rural belt in Karnataka emerged as writers who looked at victimhood of exploitation, affliction and suffering as the base for their creative writing. This article attempts to analyse the human quest for redefining the identity of victims of exploitation through a critical analysis of *Untouchable* (1935) and *Vaishakha* (1981).

Mulk Raj Anand, a great social critic and humanist, exposed the evil of caste system and proclaimed dignity

of man as supreme value. He discerned and imagined the sorrows of untouchables which are reflected in his narration of the plight of Bakha, the protagonist of the novel *Untouchable.* The primary humiliations experienced by untouchables in the name of caste discrimination were viewed by Anand as secondary humiliations experienced by him. It was this kind of empathetic affinities with the exploited that propelled him to read deep into the minds of exploited. By empathetically portraying Bakha's plight Anand foregrounded the innocence and work-ethos of Bakha which are projected as great values far superior value than so called perpetuated by the upper caste. As a liberal humanist, Anand projects Bakha as a canonical hero in terms of critical realism and empowerment of the exploited. The canonicity lies in the fact that the conscientious and the subaltern worker, rejected, by upper caste society becomes an agent of standing for human dignity. By proclaiming the work culture of Bakha, Anand underscores and makes an artistic statement on how the upper caste society thinks of Bakha:

"They think we are mere dirt, because we clean their dirt" *{Untouchable,* p.89).

This is how the novel *Untouchable* can be read as a seminal artistic manifesto for the liberation of the subaltern.

Chaduranga, a progressive writer in Kannada language has brought a themeof the institution of caste and its dehumanizing effect in the society in his novelVaishaka with an intention to unravel the predicament of untouchability which is deep rooted in the society. He got a vicarious imagination of the sorrows of untouchables which are reflected in his narration of the plight of Lakka, the protagonist of the novel Vaishaka. His novel delightfully brings out a graphicdescription of an interior village in Kamataka suggesting a way to emerge out ofthe centuries

old caste phobia and step into a new atmosphere with a lot of freshair for the forlorn to breathe in and discover a meaningful life. Chaduranga empathetically portrays the growth of awareness against the exploitation in his innocent protagonist Lakka- his direct experiences and closely involved observations of people and events around him. The injustice inflicted upon Lakka time and again by elite and superior elements in the society and is deprived and divested of protecting his family, kith and kin and community. Chaduranga articulates with a headline in the beginning of his novel on how upper caste society imposes injustices on Lakka and his people:

> "The village panchayat, of course is supposed to give justice, but the dice of justice always roll out in the end in favour of the wellborn" *(Vaishaka,* p.1).

Lakka becomes a motif for realism and an agent of seeking human dignity. Chaduranga's humanistic approach has created a character like Lakka to reflect his consciousness and work are far greater value than upper castes' to arouse emphathetic awakening in the society for the liberation of the untouchable.

II

Anand's *Untouchable* is a sensitive record of events of a single day in the life of a teenaged sweeper Bakha. Every day he faces the tedium of cleaning latrines, but he works putting all his vitality into his job. As the day draws by the fire of discontent smolders within and bursts into flames. His work-ethics allow him to engage in his task by forgetting the odiousness of the job, "He worked away earnestly, quickly, without loss of effort" *(Untouchable,* p. 18). The onlooker would have said "What a dexterous workman" *(Untouchable,* p. 18). His sincerity, enthusiasm and happiness towards the work, he does, reveal that he is an epitome in terms of work-ethics which keep him healthy. As S.K.Mishra points, "Bakha's passion for work proves his love for life

and his dogged determination to preserve it"[1]. His assault on work is also a compensatory mechanism for his inability to revenge the cruelty of the upper caste people. Kalinath draws water from well to relieve from his constipation and fills the pitcher of Sohini with a secret desire for her, shows the real image of bad health and the symbolic image of his dirty mind which is unholy and infected by the perversion. Anand has romanticized the image of work-ethics against the sociological background of Bakha and Kalinath.

Bakha gets abuses by a Hindu merchant for unknowingly touching and thereby polluting him. The rebukes were continuous which made Bakha senseless. People gathered around to witness the scene which tormented and troubled Bakha more and more. Bakha's turban falls down and his jalebis scattered in dust as Lalla slaps him. By the time Bakha gets strength out indignation to take revenge, Lalla ran away from the scene like a cunning fox. Bakha is a symbol of voiceless human, where Anand gave voice for the liberation of Bakha and his people when they were shackled in the "Age-old lie" present in the cultural heritage of India. Upper castes touch only to beat an untouchable is the portrayal of their predicament existed in the society.

In *Untouchable* the devotion of Bakha to the unknown God is an example to show that the human values are with the poor and the oppressed. Sohini goes to Bakha to narrate the story but not to her father which shows Anand's plot to portray the suffering of Bakha as an arena of goodness, he is a devotee, more devoted than other devotees of high caste people in the temple. "His blood had coursed along the balanced melodic line to the final note of strength with such sheer vigour that his hands joined unconsciously and his hand hung in the worship of the unknown god" *(Untouchable,* p.68). The religiosity and adoration of Bakha to God is superior to the devotion of high caste Hindus who worship in the temple. The confluence of human and divine desire flows in Bakha. As A.S.Dasan brings out, "Like Maxim Gorky,

Anand has the ability to see human qualities in the poor and the underprivileged of the Indian society"[3]. The shout of the priest "polluted, polluted, polluted!" *(Untouchable,* p.69) is nothing but hypocrisy which pervades over goodness. The power of caste keeps the roaring lion, Bakha at bay.

The village priest, Kali Nath, deliberately invites Bakha's attractive sister, Sohini, to clean the courtyard of his house where he tries to molest her. Sohini helplessly raises an alarm, and the cunning priest extricates himself from the difficult situation by shouting "polluted, polluted!" The priest is represented as a part of evil rather than human divine relationship. Anand caricatures him, mocks at him as a butter caricature. He has exposed the absence of sacredness of Hindu *varna* system in the priest and presence of the profanity. In B.Damodar Rao's words it is, "an embodiment of evil, ugliness and hypocrisy"[4]. Which is the inhuman and degrading treatment meted out in the name of religion. Bakha knows the truth of matter after the exit of priest, but he is "a tiger at bay". He suffers the humiliation of his sister, Sohini suffers but yet he feels unable to intervene and do something. A crestfallen Bakha returns home and can do no more than rage against the atrocities and brutalities inflicted by upper castes. Mulk Raj Anand makes Bakha a voiceless human symbol of honest indignation. The suffering of Bakha becomes a motif for critical realism. He roars like a lion caged by the society of oppression and hegemony which dehumanized and curtailed his identity.

Untouchables were not allowed to draw water from the well because their touch could defile water, not allowed into the temple, groceries and eatables were thrown at them, water is sprinkled before picking up their money, schools were forbidden to their children to avoid their touch. The sensitive Bakha vents out his anger against the treatment meted out in the society, "The woman of the big house in the silversmith's gully threw the bread at me from the

fourth storey" *(Untouchable,* p.89). He is a mute spectator and lion in a cage. He has humiliating, terrifying and horrendous experiences. He suffers humiliation and cruelty from the upper caste people because he was born as an untouchable and does menial jobs for them. Adding an insult to his injury, his father Lakha, who accepts and bows down to the practice of untouchability considers it as a social norm, tries to assuage his feelings. Here Anand pictures the callous attitude of upper castes on untouchables and mocks at the Hindu custom of touching a nauseating bull. As Saros Cowasjee comments, "There are orthodox Hindus who worship a bull emitting foul smell but will not touch a human being; there are temples whose doors are closed to those who keeps its ground clean; we see the queer notion of 'pollution by touch' and 'pollution from a distance'"[5]. Untouchables were treated like a dog by throwing food at them but a stinking bull has been touched as sacredness. The author had redefined the position of the protagonist and his people to give them identity and self respect through suffering as motif.

Chaduranga's *Vaishaka* is a saga of an untouchable Lakka. He has become a bonded labourer in the house of Bundamma in his childhood itself because, his teacher made him to drop out of the school on the pretext of defilement. On the advice of the teacher "He had been plucked out of the school by his father into the world of bonded labour" *(Vaishaka,* p.47). Ever since the day he was freed from Bundamma as a bonded labour, started working in areca plantation of Krishna Shastri. He is a trust worthy servant and hard working labourer. He gets pat from his master that "I like this lad's work...even burly big-boned young men are not a patch on him" *(Vaishaka,* p. 173). Lakka is a true servant of his master with his work-ethics and commitment. His skill to tie the arched hood and ride the cart is matchless. He is being called by Krishna Shastri whenever cart journey is needed. Nanjegowda, who moves closely with the *swami*

of Jappayya's *matha* is a cunning fox, hypocrite, exploitative and lecherous scoundrel. He helps the innocent and Godly *swami* who is always involved in the prayers and rarely appears in the public. He misuses this association to meet his needs. He uses the service of Lakka to get liquor bottles in the pretext of medicine for *swami*. He fooled the pariahs by quoting Basavanna every now and then. His work-ethics are against the Hindu culture of worship, sacredness, divinity and it is a part of profanity. Lakka has not been allowed into the temple and his touch has been considered as defilement, but his work-ethics are greater in value than Nanjegowda. Chaduranga has romanticized the image of work-ethics against the sociological background of Lakka and Nanjegowda.

Rukmini, a Brahmin widow goes through a forced sexual encounter by her father-in-law Krishna Shastri, and Lakka, an untouchable labourer faces a forced sexual encounter by Rukmini herself. The village panchayat has decided to cane Lakka by tying him up to the Pandava-pillar and banishes him from the village without enquiring the crime of Krishna Shastri. He has been made a victim because he is an untouchable. The gravity of the crime is severe because an untouchable is responsible for the pregnancy of a Brahmin widow. The crime of Krishna Shastri has never come into picture because he has been regarded by villagers as an erudite and respectable person. Dr. Basavaraj Sabarada comments that, "Even though the two sexual acts (Krishnashastri *versus* Rukmini and Rukmini *versus* Lakka) are like two faces of a coin, Rukmini and Lakka's sexual encounter becomes an unforgivable crime in the eyes of the society because Lakka was an untouchable"[6]. Chaduranga has portrayed the suffering of untouchables as victimhood in the society especially in villages by highlighting the endangered identity of his protagonist. The novel exposes the dehumanizing role of the caste where Lakka becomes a victim.

Chaduranga's protagonist, Lakka is being abused by a *madi* woman for defilement. He has been flogged and banished from the village by the corrupt village panchayat. K. Narasimha Murthy comments on *Vaishakha* that, "The novel portrays the social life of village people mainly the tragedy of the downtrodden and untouchables". The independent India could not assure the poor and the untouchable like Lakka, the right to justice; rather if victimized them and made them scapegoats. The author wants to liberate Lakka from the sickening surrounds through his sociological imagination.

Chaduranga has portrayed in *Vaishakha* that the oppressed and the poor are close to earth with the humanness and tenderness in spite of hardships and humiliating experiences they endure. Kalyani, the mother of Lakka goes to Shakunikoppalu with *rottis* to feed him. She talks about the news of Rukmini that she left the village and died in the fort of Chitramula. She feels pity for Rukmini when she says, "These Brahmins should not have gone to the extent of thinking of shaving off her head and chasing her out of the village. 'Rukmini is a pregnant woman', they ought to have felt" *(Vaishakha,* p.448). Rukmini was responsible for the punishment of Lakka who has been caned and banished from the village. In spite of the suffering meted on her son Lakka, Kalyani feels for the plight of Rukmini. Compassion is shown to reside in the poor and the oppressed, not in the rich.

III

The real image of Anand's protagonist is, he is a victim. He is being seen as a low caste to clean dirt caused by others. He is a passive hero, a victim who had no social standing. Lakha, the father of Bakha is a conformist but Bakha who learns the hypocrisy of the caste system. Bakha who travels from innocence to experience reveals that why should I be remained and looked as low caste. His father, Lakha's

journey from experience to innocence is more agreed to social needs. Bakha's consciousness of his existence presses him to rebel. In the conflict between Bakha's consciousness and the social environment, he becomes, as K.N.Sinha puts it, "simultaneously a rebel and a victim . His anguish and sorrows become the anguish and sorrows of readers empathetically. Anand has indicated that the solution to the human predicament is possible only through the social change which gives social existence to the underprivileged. Through empathetic awaking he tried to bring the social change.

The desire image of Anands's Bakha is, he is not a rebel or a revolutionary, he does not revolt against the odds, and he is a conscious man with the historicity of time. The novel was written in the colonial period when there was only 7% literacy and the society was rampant with untouchability. Anand has controlled the portrayal of revolution to an almost inability to revolt. If an untouchable hero was produced by the Dalit writers as Arun Mukherjee points, "That would have produced a hero capable of thinking his own thoughts and making his own decisions"[9]. If Bakha had rebelled it would have been an utter failure realistically and also, it could not create compassion. The novel would have become a fantasy than being realistic.

The protagonist, Lakka in *Vaishaka* is a silent observer and responsive to the things happening around him. He has been exploited as a bonded labour from his childhood to adulthood by the upper caste people and he is conscious of exploitation. Krishna Shastri has opposed the ritual of tonsuring Rukmini, which is their custom when she has become widow, since he had a dormant desire on her. Lakka has surrendered to Rukmini because he treated her like a mother and he did not want to hurt her. The perversion of Krishna Shastri rules over the goodness of Lakka. The village panchayat has always delivered its verdict in favour of upper caste people which humiliated him. He is furious

against the injustices inflicted upon him and his people. He has struggled to regain his childi-like innocence, as G.S.Amur puts it, "in a corrupt environment"[10]. He kicked a small stone along, spat out a thick gob of phlegm on the hedge and expressed angrily that "Those sons-of-dogs have always treated us as playthings to be kicked about at will" *(Vaishakha,* p.l). It was a voice of honest indignation, suffering of a passive character Chaduranga has exposed to the world with an intention to create a space for an identity and justice for Lakka and his people in the society.

Lakka undergoes mental and physical sufferings and travels in different consciousness without revolt. But he never loses his faith in humanity and exhibits an inborn love for fellow human beings and his brimming and preponderant zest for life elevates him in the eyes of the readers. The seething anger of Lakka does not grow into a violent attack that would have reduced the novel into a mediocre one. Chaduranga meticulously handles the theme where Lakka never grows into a revolutionary hero. Chaduranga has created a character like Lakka to arouse compassion which undoubtedly discovers a parallel with Anand's approach.

In the end, Anand gives three solutions to the suffering of Bakha, conversion, Gandhi's idea of equality and the flush system. There is a tendency on the part of Anand to be propagandic, his intuition overwhelms the progressive journey Bakha makes and opts for flush system. Adult Anand speaks for a seventeen year old boy Bakha, who cannot think as a new Romanticisation, modern development should take care of eliminating manual scavenging. With the flow in artistic progression from beginning to the end Anand has a wisdom to think, flush system the compassionate humanism plea against all indignities of the character. E.M.Forster remarks that, *'"Untouchable* could only have been written by an Indian who observed from the outside. No European, however sympathetic, could have created the

character of Bakha, because he would not have known enough about his troubles. And no Untouchable could have written the book, because he would have been involved in indignation and self-pity"[11].

In the end of the novel *Vaishaka* Lakka moves out of the village towards the forest symbolizing the liberation from the corrupt human habitation to the just animal habitation. He has tired of life in the inhumane world. The protagonist himself tries a way out of claustrophobia. Chaduranga had symbolically represented that the harmonious co-existence among the wild animals is better than human beings which can be emulated. The adult Lakka grows from experience to experience because Chaduranga in his middle-age speaks for him, whereas the boy, Bakha grows from innocence to experience as twenty five year old Anand speaks for him. Use of plot, language, universal theme and multidimensional reading in *Untouchable* and *Vaishakha* render these works to emerge out as classic creations in the Indian literary scene which attracted many critics.

As there are no internal and external concrete evidences to show that Chaduranga has been influenced by Anand, but both were influenced by Shivarama Karanth's novel *'Chomana Dudi'(1933),* one of the earliest works in the genre of novel in Indian literature to handle the theme of caste by making an untouchable a protagonist. In spite of this the approach towards the subaltern in the novel *Vaishaka* is different from that of *Untouchable.* Lakka works to satisfy his master for the sake of food and wage. The sense of vitality of the theme is higher version because his protagonist Lakka is an adult with matured experiences and he is domiciled in the post-colonial society. Lakka was angry against the upper caste people because he was a post-colonial child in the throbs of independence struggle but the artistic anger of Bakha is a desired image of Anand when his protagonist is voiceless and needs poetic dignity. The consciousness between Bakha and Lakka varies in

how the upper caste people treat them. Like Bakha, Lakka also expressed his anger against the oppression in solitude but, less aggressive because of different sociological and historicity of time. Lakka wanted an identity and justice for him and his people in the society. He lived in an improved society where he gets an appreciation for his work and food from some people, but Bakha always gets abuses and suffers from hunger.

Lakka and Bakha possess a basic nobility of feeling and spirit of humanism which keep them polite and genial towards the people for whom they work; both undergo severe physical, moral and spiritual injuries and suffer from hunger, humiliation, dirt, deprivation and are aggrieved and shocked at their social inferiority. They do not rebel against them and endure all inflictions silently like an obedient child. The anger of Lakka and Bakha does not grow into a violent attack against the oppressors as they are shackled with rigidity of tradition-bound society and hegemony. In spite of sufferings, hurdles and identity crises in their life, they are optimistic and retain an appetite for life. It is the faith in humanity which helped them to wade through problems after problems. Their physical inability to revolt is a realistic picture of the society and their authors' propaganda to create compassion. Bakha's and Lakka's attachment with their family, sense of true delight, their joy with nature and commitment to work- ethics are great human qualities.

In the novel *Untouchable,* Bakha is a universal figure to represent oppression, injustice, humiliation wrought upon the whole community of outcastes in India. Bakha symbolizes the exploitation and oppression which have been the fate of millions of untouchables like him. His anguish and humiliation is symbolic of the suffering of all the so-called outcastes and underdogs during the pre-independence period but, even today these problems exist in different forms and intensities. In this perspective the novel can be

reread as a cry of victimhood, honest indignation against suffering and exploitation.

Darumanahalli, where the central action of the novel *Vaishaka* takes place is at once a particular village and any village in India, giving a universal touch to the action of the novel narrated through an analysis of the life of Lakka, an untouchable.

Mulk Raj Anand and Chaduranga have brought out a controlled portrayal of revolution in their novels, a sociological solution by exposing the cornered identity, suffering and victimhood of their protagonists as bases of their writing. They were socially conscious writers who fathomed and brought out timeless truth and evoked a sense of empathetic awakening. In the backdrop of highlighting the sufferings and oppression of the socially weakened, marginalized, cornered, unprivileged and under-privileged sections of the society and paving a way for their redemption, upliftment and identity. These two writers defend a heritage, the heritage of compassionate humanism and universal brotherhood. These novels have imbibed the quality of universality and remain epical in nature. They can be read as long as a parade of pain, suffering and oppression exist in the world. As Victor Hugo said in his *Les Miserables,* "There is always more misery among the lower classes than there is humanity in the higher".

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15

Shivaram Karanth's "Chomana Dudi" and Mulkarajanand's *"Untouchable"*

—*Veena H.M.*

Literature as we know it is reflection of life. Though this reflection we as individuals try to analyze and understand the way of this life. Mere words alone really cannot reach the people and serve the purpose so, our writers created the characters and plot to make the readers feel the feelings of the character and understand the situation. Many works has been produced so far on the life of dalits and through the works writers have tried to change the mindset of the people in the society. Shivaram Karanth's 'Chomanadudi' in kannada and Mulkaraj Ananda's 'untouchable' in English are some of the works in which the Socio-Economic and cultural life of Dalits are presented.

When we study these two movels we are introduced to the society where the Castesystem plays a very vital role in deciding the fate of an individual. Choman Dudi's main character choma and 'Untouchable's main character Bhakha undergo a similar turmoil because of the caste in which they are born. Choma wants to work in his own piece of land with a pair of oxen he has which he found by chance in the forest. Whereas Bakha has a dream of leading a decent and respectful life like those of tommies but his caste prevents him from becoming what he desires to be.

In both the novels we can see that their dwellings are far away from the main stream of live were the day to day activities of the society takes place. Choma's hut in the outskirts of the village and Bakha's house outside the town filled with dirt and stink symbolises the darkness filled in the life of Dalits who are leading this life by force not by choice.

The poor economic conditions of Dalits are portrayed through the debts taken by Choma to fulfill the needs of the time and his helpless condition to repay to debt. It is this debt which forces him to send his sons to work in the coffee estate and yields his daughter to the manager of the coffee estate. Bhkha's poverty is revealed through the incident of his willingness to buy some sweets; He considers dare I buy some sweets?. After considering all varieties of sweets he decides to buy jalebis.Even the confectioner knows the sweepers taste and says, "Sweepers should not buy sweets, if at all they buy, it should only be coarse stuff like jalebis. When he buys jalebis he was vaguely ashamed and self conscious at being seen buying sweets". The entire family of Bakha depends on the high caste Hindus for their meals.

The social conditions play a very prominent role in deciding the economic stability of and individual because his caste is the criteria which decides whether he should possess a land of not. Karanth has portrayed the situation through the words of Belli who tells her father. "Father, we should not dream beyond our station. To be a former, one should be born as a Brahmin or a Banta or a Gowda. When we are born as Untouchables. How can we want to be farmers?

In *Untouchable* Bakha's situation is also same Bakha frequently questions the purpose of his obligations to do the job as a sweeper he need not practice so low a task. However he accepts his low position as a sweeper even though not by preference. He realizes that there is no way out of this occupation due to the orthodox existiong system in the Hindu

rigid society .Bakha struggles with his thoughts to remove himself from the demeaning occupation presuming it would eventually free him from the low caste of his which is due to his occupation. His struggle is to come to the main stream of the society which is outside the low caste community which he belongs to but in the interim he remains an Untouchable.

Bakha and Choma want to come to the main stream but the existing Varna system of Hindu society prevents them from doing so.

In Chomanadudi, Choma lost his son who was drown in a river only because he belonged to a lowe4rcate and the humanity of the people belonged to the upper caste was dead and the late attempt by a Brahmin boy to save choma's son Neela was futile as it was too late. Here the helpless condition of a Dalit to save his son depicts the rigid cletches of the caste system and its influence on the people.

In a contrast situation in Mulkraj Anands's *Untouchable* where Bakha helps a injured upper caste boy but in turn he was blamed for pollution an upper caste boy.

The series of incidents in Chomanadudi and Untouchable reveals the pathetic situation Dalits are supposed to undergo. Society in the name of stratification has exploited the situation of Dalit and his life to the fullest extent.

Choma's daughter Belli and Bakh's sister are the symbols of the exploited Dalit women who are forced to yield to the situation against their will and their helpless position in the rigid caste based society. Though Belli is seen with the manger of the coffee estate not by external pressure but the internal pressure of clearing off the debt of her father and hoping for a better life with a little amount of money which she could get out of her compromise is the result of the exploitation where Choma has to pay Rs 20 for Rs 5. Belli who was the pride and faith of her father lost herself for the sake of clearing the debt. This incident presents the

cunning aspect of the people belonging to the upper caste who utilize the situation for their need.

In *Untouchable* Bakha's sister becomes a victims of sexual exploitation due to her caste and poverty. She is very pretty, but she has not enough clothes to cover herself. When the pandit tries to molest her she screams to protest, but when the priest accuses her for polluting him, she remains surprised. She stops her brother from taking any aggressive action against the priest and returns home and accepts here humiliation with the docile humility of the woman of her caste.

The journey through these two novels introduces us to the characters who are trying to come to the main stream like Choma and Bakha and the characters who have accepted life as it is like Bakha's father Lakha. Sankayappa in Karanth's Chomanadudi is a character who is also a victim of social status tells Choma that he could not give him a piece of land as his forefathers never did it.

Both the works present the dreams and aspirations of the Dalits and their struggle to fulfil their dreams. Through these works writers try to throw light on the situation of the Dalits and the need to change the mindset towards the Dalits or so called lower caste peoplw and the need to create the environment where the humanity breeds and the talent grows.

16

Basavanna's Way of Negotiating Dalit Issue- Differenrt Aspects

—A. Malukarjunappa and
Evangeline Nerella

At the beginning, everything is an idea. It spreads, it grows and it becomes into a movement, a revolution. Ideas float around but the personality that catches them, brings them into realization through actions matters a lot. The constancy, the perseverance and the will to hold to those ideas make them living reality. Prophets, seers, revolutionaries and great men lived up to their ideas, spread them consistently, braced them up and faced all kinds of hardships for the sake of these ideas. Finally, many of them sacrificed their lives while others lived for the sake of their ideas which they thought reality. In short, they become 'mad' for their ideas and made others mad for these ideas.

One such great personality who consistently spread his ideas was Basaveswara. He was a visionary and saw that his ideas had to be spread after his life time, so he built a community of visionaries, who could consistently persevere the goal of realizing these ideas into realities in day to day life. So, a small idea grew into a group, this group into a community. Later, it took the shape of a caste and a religion. Change is the nature of the world. Change is constant. Ideas can also change. They can't remain as they are. New, subsidiary ideas cling around them with different colors and meanings. These ideas create a group which is

diametrically opposite to those original ideas. It is human drama which is entertaining to see but also sorrowful to watch.

One such idea is 'equality' among all human beings, which caught the fancy of several great men at several times in history at several places. Some could not digest the idea of 'inequality and discrimination' meted out to a section of people. They found no reason to separate them from the main stream and withdrew certain privileges. They could not bear insults poured on some people because of their birth. At different places, different people tried to negotiate with this question of discrimination. Color is the issue in European, American and African countries which was taken up from time to time by some visionaries.

Untouchability is the issue, these visionaries grapple in Indian society then and now. Basaveswara was one such visionary, who tried to negotiate with the issue of untouchability. He couldn't see any meaning in discriminating a section of human beings as 'untouchables'. He could see perfect sameness in all human beings metaphysically, emotionally, physically and socially. But, he couldn't leave this 'idea of equality' without taking it up to its logical end. He was persistent and ready to experiment and implement it in his own way, in his own group.

The distance in time i.e. from the 21st century back to 12th century and lack of evidence through historical material, it is everybody's guess to make any kind of assumptions on the works of Basavanna or what Basavanna intended or not intended. It is highly impossible to say that he had intended to reform or revolutionize the Hindu society, or wanted to eradicate all the evils of society. It would also be impossible to say, whether he wanted to build a parallel religion devoid of all these evils or he wanted to reform it from inside. Anybody can think on either side and argue on his own lines and could even show evidence in support of his views. So, in this playground of multifarious ideas, I confine

myself to the idea of how Basavanna tried to negotiate with his ideas of equality in his own group. This group of visionaries includes some known names like Siddarama, Chenna Basavanna, Allama, Akka Mahadevi, Madara Chennaiah and also innumerable unknown Sharanas. This small group tried to implement, inculcate, and digest this idea of equality among them. This group was essentially drawn from the big community where 'untouchability' was part of social structure which was normal and natural. So, there was a clash between their ideology and practicality. The self of the participants raises its head again and again, so it should be taught this new idea of equality to convince themselves on multifarious level. The idea should be spread; tested, negotiated and also convincing arguments should be propounded.

The first and the foremost platform, Basavanna and Sharanas took up to propound equality was at the metaphysical level. Man is equal, for that matter; all animals and man are equal as one soul i.e. Atman, Brahman that pervades them. When only one 'Atman' which is variously named as Brahman, Siva, Linga, pervades all, then where is inequality. Purely, at metaphysical level there is no difference between man and man. The same had been made to realize by an untouchable to Adi Shankara. So, one can accept metaphysically, all are equal. The same fact has been beautifully put in Kannada words through vachanas of Basavanna and other vachanakaras. It is the way of reinforcing the idea again and again so that it sunk well into their small group which had experimented with novel but natural idea of equality:

Did the soul of a woman have
Breasts and braids?
Did the soul of a priest wear the Sacred thread?
Did the soul of a low caste person
Hold a staff in its hand?
How do the ignorant people of this world
Understand the riddle complicated by you,

O Ramanatha! (Jadara Dasimayya, SVS, Vol. 7 V) (2003, CR.Yaravintilimath & M.M.Kalburgi -v 168, page-96)

But, the ideal and the practical differ a lot. Sometimes, the ideal is a lot dangerous and practical is made safe by consensus of the society. Whatever, the reinforcement of ideas at the level of ideal won't help to implement that idea at the level of day to day living? It needs special strategies at the practical level to tackle it.

Basavanna and vachanakaras tried to establish the fact of equality of all people by making them equal at theological level. Theology is a kind of day to day adjustment. They built a community, a group where they started implementing 'a common code of conduct' for all the group members. This common code of conduct insists on uniformity at the basic level of dress, food, way of living, addressing a person, way of earning and spending, in brief, they built their own culture of the group.

At the theological level, they implemented the theory of one God, one way of worshipping, one cluster of external symbols of that worship. In this particular case they are called, 'Astavarana'. They run like 'Guru, Linga, Jangama, Vibuthi, Rudrakasha, Padodaka, Prasada, Mantra' these are the theological symbols. They also insisted in theological way of life. Obligatory ways or attitudes to be inculcated by men and Strong determinations to follow these obligations by them are enumerated. They are 'Panchacharas' which goes on like 'Lingachanara, Sadachara, Shivachanara, Ganachara and Brityachara'. They also tried to inculcate way of earning and spending to make the group sustain itself economically and also support the members of the group, who exclusively looked after the group activities, so that they introduced 'Kayaka and Dasoha', work culture as well as sharing culture.

So, members of the group, who follow all these 'common codes of conduct', are one and the same. They are equal in all respects at least within the group.

But, this group is also a part of the longer group i.e. society at that time. There were conventions and hierarchical order in that society. No society was an exception to this hierarchical order of living. Basavanna, thought, that too rightly, the people who belong to the lowest of the low of the society need special attention and special reinforcement. He stated again and again that all these sections of people attain divinity, sacredness thus they become 'touchables' when they follow this 'common code of conduct' of the group. The resultant vachanas, question, convince, cajole, order on this particular issue of 'untouchablility'. There is also a lot of reasoning, propounding hypothesis and proving the hypothesis as part of the issue of 'untouchability' in vachanas of Vachanakaras:

The theological equality is reflected in this vachana. It asserts,

> Who so he be, how so high in rank,
> Without the Linga's touch he will be the lowest in caste
> The moment Linga touches a person; he will become a high caste man,

As at the touch of Parusha, The base metal becomes gold without fail:

> Lord Kudala Sangha won't like the doubting devotees. (Basavanna, SVS Vol.1 v.142) (2003, C.R.Yaravintilimath & M.M.Kalburgi - v 168, page - 96)

The assertion that wearing of 'Linga' makes one 'touchable' and he will no longer be an untouchable. The 'linga on anga' makes the anga as sacred as linga. But, vachanakaras are never satisfied with the assertion. They resorted to reasoning on various levels. One of that is on ethical level. All the people who are ethically good are good and so are to be respected and revered:

> He alone is a Madiga who kills animals, He alone is a Holeya who eats filth, What worth is the caste of those well born, Who sacrifice an animal and eat it? Our Kudala Sanga's devotees Who wish all the living well,

Are only well-born. (Basavanna - SVS Vol 1, v 591) (2003, C.R.Yaravintilimath & M.M.Kalburgi - page-37)

On ethical and theological grounds untouchables are not untouchables. But, from general to specific, universal to particular is the journey of literature. Madara Chennayya was made representative of the issue of untouchability. He was again and again brought into the vachanas to stress equality of untouchable in this group:

It's better to stay with a righteous man,
Even if he is a low-born Holeya, O Lord!
Surrender to the Linga, never stray, from the path of virtue,
In our Kudala Sanga's Maha Mane, 0 Sir,
Madara Chennayya is a righteous man! (Basavanna, SVS Vol 1. V 135) (2003, C.R.Yaravintilimath & M.M.Kalburgi - page-29)

There is also an explicit statement that those who are not following this 'common code of conduct', they are real untouchables. The logic of 'untouchables become 'touchables' and 'touchables become untouchables' by the act of worshipping or not worshipping Linga is the strategy of vachanakaras. Birth has nothing to do with this. Though, one is born as Brahmin, he is considered lowest of the low, if he won't worship Linga. This assertion, this repetition, though odd at the beginning, changes into 'normal and natural' in course of time. We see innumerable vachanas of this nature:

O God, by worshipping Thee Cenna's caste become pure; O God, by worshipping Thee Dasa's caste become sacred!

"He is a superior sage, Who is engaged in the Linga worship
Though he be a Svapaca, Who does not worship the Linga,
Though he be a Brahmin."
This being the truth.
What caste onei9 born in?
He alone is a Holeya,
Who does not say,
'I salute Thee, the un-born". (Basavanna, SVS. Vol. 1, v 605) (2003, C.R.Yaravintilimath & M.M.Kalburgi, page-38)

Like this, Vachanakaras tried to negotiate with the question of untouchability at the level of ethics, way of life, food habits along with philosophical and theological aspects. But, Basavanna was not satisfied with this, he again reiterated this with his personal identification with the untouchables. His personal identification is so intense that it was taken as evidence to show that he belonged to untouchables and subsequently, there was a controversy over this issue. This personal identification and going a step forward to be with them is also a strategy followed by him to make them equals in his group. His vachana says,

Our Madara cennayya is my father,
Our Dohara Kakkayya is my elder uncle;
Look you, Cikkayya is my grand-father;
Our Kinnara Bommayya is my elder brother,
Then how come you know me not,

O Lord Kudala Sangama? (Basavanna, SVS Vol. 1, v 349) (2003, C.R.Yaravintilimath & M.M.Kalburgi - page - 33)

Not only he identified himself with them but he also elevated their status by elevating Madara Cennayya's status. Basavanna says, Siva himself had dined in the house of untouchable the Madara Cennayya. In one of his vachanas he says:

'Did He not dine with Cennayya?' (Basavanna, SVS Vol 1, v433)

Apart from this personal example, Basavanna and other vachanakaras also resorted to ridiculing, satirizing and also questioning the stand taken by Brahmins, Vedas and Sastras. They tried to prove that untouchable Sharanas are far superior to Brahmins who believe in themselves as superiors to others:

'He is a superior sage,
Who is engaged in the Linga - worship,
Though he be a Svapaca,
He is lower than a Svapaca,
Who does not worship the Linga,

Though he be a Brahmin' (Basavanna, SVS Vol 1, v 605) (2003, C.R.Yaravintilimath & M.M.Kalburgi - page-38)

The ridicule of Brahmana and praising of untouchables in one and the same vachana is another strategy followed by vachanakaras to stress the need for eradication of untouchability in their group:

What a pity it is!
Because they know Thee not
They have grass in their hands!
Because they will not bow to Thee
They have a noose round their neck!
What use is washing and rinsing in the sacred waters?
What use is holding the nose and dipping in the stream?
In what stream did Tanner Kakkayya dip?

Among Kudala Sanga's devotees. (Basavanna, SVS, Vol 1, V 588) (2003, C.R.Yaravintilimath & M.M.Kalburgi, page-89)

Basavanna and vachanakaras tried to create equality of untouchables along with all other Sharanas in their community. Apart from the untouchable community members, many other lower community people joined the movement in considerable numbers. But, this community grew as time passed and also changed according to the times. At the beginning, it assembled as a small group, grew into a community, then into a sect and a caste and finally into a religion. In the course of 800 years from 12th to 21st century, it influenced and also is influenced by the larger society. The conventions, customs and culture have its own hold on the life of the people in larger society. Some groups of untouchables might have completely mingled into the community of Lingayats without any trace of its origin and became one of the higher castes within the Hindu fold. Some slipped back and some other continued to be linga wearing untouchables. In the 20th century, a kind of revival of Veerasaivism/Lingaitism by Swamijis of the community has been taking place. Some of the Swamijis have taken it to their heart to address the issue of untouchability on

the lines of vachanakaras though there is considerable opposition from its own fold. Because of the efforts of the vachanakaras, the issue of untouchability and its eradication is kept alive to this day.

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17

Dalit Narratology: A Study of Bama's *Vanmam*

—M. Suresh Kumar

One of the major off shoots of the twenty first century is the emergence of the marginalized people from periphery to the center. The postcolonial writings have tried to give representations to the voice of the voiceless or the oppressed. This trend is being followed even in India. Dalit literature gives expression to the untold feelings and agony of the Dalits. It is a protest against all forms of exploitations based on caste, colour, creed and occupation. It is a revolution against the caste based oppression.

India is well known all over the world for its rich culture and traditional values. It is the land of unity in diversity where people of different languages, religions, castes and cultures live together. But unfortunately it is the caste system which began as the tool of distribution of work became the cause for insurmountable exploitation, oppression and discriminations. This caste system instead of providing livelihood became the cause for the death of many innocent people, among them Dalits had the lion's share in caste based poly tricks employed by the so called upper caste people who wanted to show their hegemony. Indian constitution provides some privileges to Dalits so that they can improve their life style and be away from caste based oppression. But, still Dalits are subjected to humiliation, discrimination and untouchability which make them to denigrate and become victims for no fault of theirs.

The caste system in India is entrenched in such a way that it is difficult to subvert the cocoon of the upper caste.

However, with education and experience Dalits have become more conscious day by day claiming their rights and dignity in the society.

The early 1990s Witnessed Dalits making attempts to write themselves into History as part of Ambedkar Centnary celebrations. The increasing number of atrocities against Dalits led to a sort of revolution. This revolution paved the way for Dalit literature. It took several forms i.e. Pamphlets, Audio-cassettes, short stories, translation studies, novels etc. It helps Dalit writers to authenticate the feelings of Dalits in a way that can reach many people. Dalit writing is a sort of campaign and a clarion call for the rights of Dalits. The central theme in all most all the Dalit works seem to be victimization of Dalits. The role of media cannot be denied in the spread of Dalit victimization. The media reports only the caste clashes but not the struggles of Dalits.

Bama began to be noted as a writer with the publication of *Karuku{* 1992). Bama, the first Tamil Dalit woman creative writer, received Crossword award for the Semi-autobiographical sketch "Karuku". Her works include *Kisumbukkaran* (1996). It was translated into English as Harum, Scarum Saar. The third on is *Sangati* (1994).It was translated into English as Events. The foruth one is *Vanmam(2003),* transalted into English under the same title in 2008. Bama with her experience and exposure tried to represent issues like caste, religion and women. She tried to articulate the voice of dalits in a realistic manner. Her stories, novels give a glimpse into the lives of the subalterns.

A series of episodes of the Kandampatti village give an apt representation of struggle of Dalits to have at least their belly filled with a little kanji. In this process they

struggled hard to live and get education. They also believed that education can change their life style. *Vanmam* is about the Dalits who struggled hard to live and survive in spite of several inhuman treatments meted out to them. It is the victory of the victimized over the caste based discrimination. In the process of leading a better life some Dalits took upon to Christianity which they thought would improve their life style. Education played a crucial role in the change of the situation in the village where some of the educated people started their fight against this caste based politics played by the upper caste people. They also realized that the upper caste people are using Dalits as pawns to instigate anger and fume among Dalits so that they can benefit from this policy of divide and rule.

In the beginning Dalits who were leading a peaceful life started fighting among themselves, instigated by the other caste people. This struggle for domination consumed lives of a number of innocent Dalits for no fault of theirs made scapegoats most of the times. This animosity continued for several years among Dalit communities in spite of several compromises. *Vanmam* delineates the story of Dalits and their struggle for existence. Bama in this novel begins with a question i.e. "Every human being should be seen as a human being, and respected as a human being. That is their goal... a society in which every person is equal. Will it ever be a reality?" (Vanmam Author's note: 8)

Vanmam is situated in the village called Kandampatti where people of different caste live. The houses of people are clustered based on the caste they belong to. The Parayars and Pallans live in the eastern part of the village. The children of both Parayars and Pallans go to schools. Most of the Parayars leave the villge to get education but not many of the pallars leave the village to get education. "As more and more of the Parayar boys left the village to get education and then came back, they began to detest this practice wholeheartedly" (Vanmam: 7). From this it

can be understood that it is the education which made all the difference in their life style. Now, they have improved their life style because they are able to ponder and realize what went wrong. In their heart of hearts they ask why god has made them like that, but made us like this, the lower caste.

Bama's heart seems to have pricked by the wretched and vulnerable condition in which Dalits live. In order to depict the real situation she gives a glimpse of Saminathan's house which is a thatched house. They don't even have place to sleep properly in their house this can be known through these lines "Not all of them can stretch out to sleep inside that tiny space. Usually, Saminathan and his father go to chavady to sleep" (Vanmam: 6). The condition of Dalits is so low that they don't even have two meals per day. After completion of their lowly job they brought only Kanji and pickle to stay alive.

Marraasu a Parayan and Kuruppusamy a Pallan earn their living by working in the fields of Naickers. There are frequent quarrels between Marraasu and Kuruppusamy. Pichamurthy a Pallan helped them to understand that it is futile to fight for this "Why all this fighting amongst us? Whether the fields are dry or watered, what is the gain to you? It's someone else who is going to reap the benefit, but it's you two who are fighting! Let it go both of you" (Vanmam: 10). As things took its worst stage Kuruppusamy lifted the spade he was holding, and with the shaft of the spade he struck a hard blow on the head of Marraasu. Marrassu fell to the ground with a cry of utmost agony. "Saminathan felt distressed whenever he thought of how his uncle Marraasu had been murdered. The memory also aroused an insane fury in him. "Because we have no money, no education, they killed and buried chithappa in a ditch... as if it was all in a day's work, as if he were a mere dog or something"(Vanmam: 11).

In another episode Pallars killed Sesurathnam and Savariappan. The horrible scene of Sesurathnam being chased and hacked to death still lingered in the minds of parayars. Three young Parayar boys Paulraju, Saharaju and Panneer Selvam were more frenzied with every passing day. They were the people who had run away when Sesuratnam was attacked. They went about with only one constant thought in their mind i.e. to carry out revenge by killing Pallans. "For those two or three weeks, people went about nervously; not knowing what would happen or when. Then, just as things seemed to be somewhat settling back to normal... suddenly, totally unexpectedly... it happened" (Vanmam: 114). The moment they caught sight of three or four Pallans they thought they should finish them off. They whipped out their aruvals and hacked down Pallans. After this incident Pallans waited with blood lust to take revenge. Since Pallans were not able to get hold of any Parayar man the Pallar people "With a single blow one of them chopped off Chandana Mary's head. They hacked down Amalorbhavam even as she pleaded for mercy, palms pressed together... Amalorbhavam fell to the ground unconscious" (Vanmam: 117). Mekkalamma one of the Parayara women made a very true and interesting point about all these fights among these two Dalit groups that "they're the ones who are plotting to make sure our tow castes never unite. This has been going on for ten or twenty years now" (Vanmam: 12).

Like this there were several incidents which endangered the life of the Pallavans and Parayars. These fights and revenges, many times posed a serious threat to their lives and their existence seem to be a big question mark to them.

They rarely realize that they are fighting for their masters (the other and upper caste people) and killing their brothers and siters. In *Vanmam* it is the realization

that made all the change in the life style of the Parayars and Pallars. They realized that it "started as a small spark now its raging flame that is threatening to burn us all" (Vanmam: 127). Finally when Sesurathnam's murder case came up for hearing Parayars found it difficult to pursue the case in the situation in which they were in and Pallars realized that the accused Pallans would be convicted of the Murder so they thought they should settle the matter amicably. This helped them to realize that "We want to live like human beings. But if we were treated like beasts, we may have to act like situation demands...Others live first and then die; but we are dying even when we're still alive. At least the generations to come must live well. Let's find a way to do that, said nattamai firmly" (Vanmam: 130). The constant message from the elders of the both streets "What's past is past. But the children who are yet to born must be able to live in this village. So let's trust one another and try to get along together" (Vanmam: 131). Fear lingered in peoples's minds. But, the determination that, come what may, we should live in harmony. This is their strong determination that has made all the difference in their lives. They decided that "From now on, our two castes must live in friendship, without quarrels and fights" (Vanmam: 134). This realization made them to settle for a compromise. This hard struck compromise among these two Dalit groups rang a death bell in the minds and hearts of the Naikers who were obsessed with the power and snatched power away from them. At last when their candidate Kaalaiyan, who was selected by both Pallavans and Parayars got elected as the president, people of both streets went to Panchayat office. This alarmed Naickers. This is the victory of the Dalits over the domination of the upper caste people which was possible only after the loss of several great and innocent Dalits. This code of compromise is the result of education combined with experience. It can be affirmed that Dalits can raise their standards only by education which can dismantle the shackles of caste based

discrimination which treat humans as some entities with no individuality.

Vanmam through fights, fumes, animosities, combats and compromises presents the realistic portrayal of life and struggle of Dalits in the process of bidding goodbye to this age old venomous practices of the upper caste people. It is a lesson to all Dalits who fight among themselves in the oblivion that united they stand divided they fall. It is the struggle for the existence which made Palians and Parayars to fight among themselves. But as the dawn of realization struck the chord of compromise, they understood that their struggle to raise the standards of their life style can only be a meaningful endeavour "as Ambedkar, the champion of the downtrodden, said, we must capture the levers of government power" (Vanmam:134). The escalation towards a better life is possible only if Dalits Educate! Organize! Agitate!

As we come to the final chapter of this novel, we seem to have probable answers to the questions that Bama raised in the author's note of the novel, "Let the coming generations at least live without quarrels end fights, riots and vendettas. Let them get along with one another... As for the future... along with the hope there also lurks the old fear. But, in their minds, they know clearly what they have to do... where they want to go" (Vanmam: 135).

"*Vanmam* thus, shares the discourse of modernity, which addresses issues concerning contemporary society and its contradictions" (Introduction: 25). The crux of this novel can be understood in authors own words "marginalized people, those who have been pushed to the very edges of society, have to put aside their internal enmities if they are to reclaim their self respect and their rightful place in society" (Author's note: 7). Finally, towards the end Pallans and Parayars realized that education, combined with experience can create wonders in the lives of people by making the people realize that empowerment comes only

where there is enlightenment and unity. This realization helped them to break the shackles of animosity and struck the chord of compromise which helped them to capture the levers of Government power. Thus, *Vanmam* ends on a note of enlightenment that united they stand divided they fall. *Vanmam* is all about combating cruelties based on caste system with constructive strategy of empowerment.

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18

Dalits are not living as they are thinking

—Dr. N. Shantha Naik

Always people say something and practice something. But great philosophers, thinkers and revolutionaries have lived as they have thought. The duality and double standard will be the obstacle. My intention to convey this idea is; when we are at receiving end we are going to please our higher authority to get done our work. All the lower caste people and minorities cannot be straight forward, whatever they write, speak, it would be misinterpreted and misunder stood. Where as a upper caste minor brhamin misinterpreted whole social structure, praised the kings and britisher and worshipped the false God.

When Dalit literature emerged as mouthpiece of their life and experience, the subject of their writings is drainage, hunger, prostitution, exploitation, suppression, caste humiliation and what not? Most of frustrated Brahmin critics argue that Dalit literature does not have aesthetics. Still recently Narahalli Balasubramanya a critic spoke on rhyme and rhytham in poetry. He quoted K.S. Narasimhaswami's poems. After his speech almost all young poets, who recited poems opposed his content of rhyme and rhytham. They openly criticized his words quoting 'former' who is unaware of rhytham and rhyme. He practices 'free verse' , which has its own melody and aesthetic. Do not we find meaning in siddalingaiah's poems:

Kick them

Skin them

Bastards

Though poetry seems vulgar or abusive it expresses anger which is burning their hearts since age.

October 16, 2013 Hindu Paper Phblished a report, Dalit man thrashed for not beating drum 'loudly'. Under this title a story narrated as follows:

> "A Dalit man was beaten up allegedly by some persons belonging to 'the upper caste' at Kudure Gundi village in Hassan taluk for not beating the drum 'loudly' during Festivities on Monday. Kodugayya (52) has been admitted to the Hassan institute of Medical Sciences Hospital. He suffered injuries to his abdomen and limbs in addition to losing four teeth".

From ages these kind of atrocities are taking place all over India. What is his fault? In a democratic country does not he have right to live without beating drum? Does not the scavenger have right to earn his lively hood without carrying excretion of human beings? Does not they have right to live without cleaning drainage and their lavetry? How long this humiliation will continue? Who is responsible for this kind of ferocious behavior of upper caste people towards the meak, poor strenghtless dalits. As Dr. B.R. Ambedkar has rightly said that, "Tiger cannot be sacrificed, goats and sheeps are sacrificed". The heinous condition of a dalit is compared to goats and sheep's. They are voiceless , meak, tolerated all suppressions and exploitation from the upper caste. They existed without existence; Here dalits are not only untouchables, adivasis and tribes but also all economically poor and helpless. Even the slum dwellers are exploited.

Thinking is a personal behavior or activity, here an individual can imagine what he is not. Many dalit literary hero's live in their own world of imagination. In 'Branded' Gaikwad's world is hunger, his immediate problem is hunger

that is all. How to overcome from that terrible enemy of many poor. The branded who are thieves have no land, no base at all. They go for theft and loot people; sometimes they are caught in the hands of ́police, who mercilessly torcher them and so they feel to take revenge against the society. They are stealing bounty for two meals. But the society is allowing those who are looting even day light are safe. Almost all the burocrats, aristocrate, politicians, swamiji's are stealing government and others toil but they are safe and protected under the law. What is the use of laws. Many reports are exposed the illegal minings in Bellary but still some continue the same. Jindal is openly transferring others property and cheating government. Some people steal under the light of law and cheating income tax to become prosporous. But those who are under the strict vigilance of the government cannot vilate the rule. That is why the poor are becoming poorer and the rich are becoming richer. The most dangerous move of Indian society is its emerging number of middle class population. This middle class is of dalits hence the Brahmins and other upper class, Yadava's Maratha;s, Vokkaliga, Lingayutha, Bengali, Gounder, Nair and many other dominant a grarian Society is opposing the upcoming dalits and adivasis. Even after 66 years of Independence, still the upper class parents are killing their daughters in the name of tradition. Till recently a dalit boy who married a tribal girl was assassinated in the name of tradition. Poor parents are helpless when their son killed mercilessly.

Why is it not possible to live as we dream as we imagine in literature. The poets are living in Utopian state which is not possible to imagine. Frost who writes in his poem 'The Mending Wall' "Good Fences make good Friends"

We have to fence out and fence in as Robert Frost has written in his poem. 'What' W.H. Auden writes in his poem is apt here to quote:

"Tomorrow we will build a nation
Where there is no suffering there is no sorrows"

Marxist Auden has imagined a world without suffering. The world which is corrupt, selfish, immoral, believed in survivel of fitest' could give chance to those who are poor to come up in the life. It is impossible to live on government rice and sixty to hundred rupees wage. Many poor formers have small piece of land living without any privileges. Population is heading towards hundred and twenty five crores. What is the future of youth who are suffering from many shortcomes. In this regard all the down-troddens who are not civilized have to understand the inner strategy of the upper caste.

It is not possible to live as we speak or as we write. We cannot boldly refuse what upper castes are creating disastrous situation in the life of dalits and other poor in India.

19

Lambanies have a Tribal Base

—Raghavendra Naik S.D.

In Karnataka Banjara, Lamani, Gormati from etc. names identifying Lambani community based on tribal to examine is here's chief aim. Lambanees in the flight of time tribals unitness how much they have kept remained to say identifying method has to face one or two dangers. In such one has was an eagle coming from outside, another is coming from inside. Lambanees have not kept remained tribal features so much, to say, if such the outers Lambanees are not eligible for reservation may be told (Banjara saying word excellently explaining to these banjaras, they should be kept away from reservation saying before few months of Raghavendra may be remembered here). Here among lambanees some only a group has tribal features if we say the inner people feel jealous. ('Sahar' community in schedule tribe going on inner reservation quarrel has started. Because of such here's for research constitutionally available reservation other special facilities keeping remain or leaving question such limited determination crossing culture existing question is important.

Before research what is origin? What are the features of tribal? It is an essential to be clarified. Regarding tribals who started to study at Indian level British were the first officers were Christian priests. They studied about tribal's properly as per their administration and publicity of the

religion. To facilitate tribal study they have conducted with such anxious people and with humanitarian consideration studied veriyar Elwan like persons are there. British scholars from tribal by name identified communities after independence study done national scholars called them tribes in habitants tribal's and other names. The above names itself indicating human races original persons are dwelling in mountains are called tribal people. The meaning of tribe is also the same, "tribe" means origin (bottom) bind means cultural values' restriction bindings performance belongs to only the original followers of traditions are tribal people (H.J. Lakkappa Gowda, 1997 350) such explanation (comment) cannot exactly explain the term 'origin' to tell more than explaining which is origin? To tell easy Karnataka's for the first time 'origin one'/ tribe (Budakattu) involving too deep study is 'T.N Shankar Narayan' has made such an effort. As he is a telling "In India Brahman, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra" caste apart from that adding 'Harijans' being a fifth caste is also there. Leaving these castes, remaining all Hindu social classes in India may be called tribals/ originals may be called (T.N. Shankara Narayana 1982: 2) such type's explanation is also not so proper. Because tribal caste becoming tribe at present's in the complex occasion as indicated to identify tribe is impossible.

To be called tribe a community has to posses many features. The scholar such have made the list. The list can be made as under.

- Separate culture.
- Depending maximum on blood relation.
- Seeing the others with doubtful nature.
- Excess sanctity.
- Special imagination of future/luck and dependable life.
- Separate language.

All these features in the same community available are were rare. Today a pure tribal's calling in communities also

all these points in the complete form cannot be available. On this background in Karnataka's Lambani communities' available tribal points may be identified. Here itself essay's limit to make know is proper. In the relevant effort Bellary districts Lambani Tanda's tradition performing specially field study's background is accepted. From the beginning to till now conducted from the scholars study too several information is utilized.

Cultural Uniqueness

Possessing a separate culture is the chief features of tribes. Taking birth from a community the culture which started continuously with its specialties is continuing such facts of tribal's through performances-epic-beliefs customs remaining have developed on this background lambanees cultural specialty may be noticed.

Birth

In Lambani communities birth concerned performances are even common facts also, it's full of specialty. In such regarding birth-kept feeling, impurity feeling generally like wild cow herd keeps a peripheral woman in a separate hut. To make the delivery from outside do not call and midwife making delivery having experience calling the same caste people getting done the delivery. In lambanees defilement resulting from birth and death, menses, impurity are followed vers strictly. Because of this for delivery separate hut or houses they prepare ready women recently delivered of baby are not supposed to do bath in bath room. For that beside house do the refuge there only hot water's ear then big pot keeping boil the water. To maintain impurity at least for a month they do not call in the home.

During the time of birth after baby's delivery navel creeper is cut by a sickle to the cutted portion castor oil mixed turmeric will be applied. From the delivery day at fifth day doing customs they say Dalava Dhokayaro (Jalwa)

afternoon at the opposite door of house digging a small pit around doing dung of cow and water nearby pit from dung and floor prepared four pair lamps will be lit. There keep daal plant wood, puddy sticks offer worships on this occasion elder women of lambani tribals joining to women recently delivered a baby (banati) filled in a pouch made by folding of her sari (udi) on her head keeping embrodary decorated citrus and put a pair of bronze pinnacle on her head. From five un-aged boys like such carrying bronze pinnacle scattering rice earning near by a temple, after the circumambulation is over kept their four's oil lamps from the thumb of right leg seven times touching to the same vessel offer salutation. Like such after pooja (worshipping) there having wood pouring in a trench making fire to that sweet offering flour oil lamp etc keeping on that pouring water cover with soil. After that on the head being of recently delivered woman's of baby's pinnacle the boys keep down. That woman's pinnacle's water keeping to the last feet of boys offer salutation. Again a pair pinnacles keeping on her head enters her to house. At last in wheat flour jiggery, ghee, coconut etc mixing prepared a kind of sweet distribute to the boys who have assembled there.

Performance of a Woman in her Course

Woman's courses, delivery etc in agriculture base culture are the symbols of fruit full occasions. But in tribal communities these impurity facts. Among Lambanees during the occasion of woman in her course secretly follow some restrictions/ bindings or perform impurity (menses) for five days they do not send her out from home. In this period to like which is given to women is delivered a baby will give nutrias food to cat. To drink they give a kind of decoction. To eat jiggery, coconut, egg, meat to the maximum extent. After that period is over making bath to a kind of prickly tree taking a seven founds around that's branch will be touched by her. Like such prickle trees branch if it is seen

for a week if it is not lost its greenish her course is being good if it is dried her course is being good if it is dried her course is being bad. They decide this community regarding in course topic doing test is logical.

Marriage Traditions

Lambanees specially relevant marriage traditions is advocating that communities tribal uniqueness chiefly here the prominence is specially for male is to be noted. Male side group to the female's house arriving requesting to offer their daughter in marriage is today's system. Similarly, female group side dowry to be given is a big social problem. Dowry is present's in little ratio has come in to existence even bride dowry giving system is compulsory. Marriage performances are different from other communities' atleast for three months were performing with grandly. Now only two or for three days it is restricted. In this community most probably even if they are too poor also tying a tiny round gold ornament tradition only will be done at brides' residence. To this marriage tradition concerned songs among lambanees are popular. One of the sentiments of poetry, comedy, pathos on marriage day will be mixed engagement tradition, initiation giving send off to bridegroom are done in tandas (village camps).

Engagement tradition is called 'Gola khairo' chambani script/ language. Their family members and tanda's relatives this performance by being self willingly involve while performing this mainly boy-girl together exchange sugar. This is there in all the religions. After that to assemble people offering betel-nut to the marriage traditions sing the invocation song.

Before the marriage, before going to marriage house bridegroom's residents to bride supply the lamp custom caught holding binding in worldly (family) life to bridegroom give the piece of advices. Than from burnt needle to the

bridegroom's right shoulder keeping a breadth line tell the friendly advices. In worldly binding life to the magic world catching if anybody is experiencing a trouble their line age's different preachers' (teachers) doing memory, it will be enough to pass away all the trouble-worries saying they advice.

After this in the very prominent house conducting last being performance is send off of the bridegroom. Before sending off of the bridegroom friendly advice will be told. By similar type marriage days from the preparation day in the bridegroom's house to bride several types arrange the traditional performances. To bride apply turmeric powder, vermilain powder; together oil-bath will be done. Making to wear bangles, applying mehandi, ritual of taking seven steps and at last from bride's house to bridegroom's house send off is a very specialized last performance is it has become "Haveli" song. It is even in different-different communities being also in lambanees it appears to be quite different. In any community the bride while sending to bridegroom's house; it will be full of sorrow sight. This one will become with the full of tears of eyes expresses perfumed water occasion with that to the bride how to lead a proper life, to behave in a good manner with everybody and get respect and an honour to their birth place and house, such a piece of advice song will be sung by elders and relatives.

To Death-Performance:

In Lambanees at the occasion of death going on performances (rituals) tribal features background some may be named. As they are possessing a specialty in any rules-regulation while performing death rituals have maintained their own specialty and manners the dead body they never keep for a long time till the corpse go with fear nobody in the house none will keep oven (fire place to cook). If the death occurs at night before the in front of death

person's house letting the fire watches the dead body. On this occasion drinking, music or any entertainment there is no provision in them.

Dead body's hand-legs are not folded either the body leaning to wall by sitting or any decorating the corpse is not there in them while at the edge of this death bathing will be arranged with hot water to the door straightly arrange him to sleep. A simple being bier to carry the corpse they prepare corpse is lying on bier; on that white cloth spreading tightly bind.

In lambanees corpses are buried and burning from both types' last rites is performed. They unmarried persons children are not burnt but burry them. Remaining all dead bodies are burnt alive while body is taking to crematorium carrying throughout the road a kind of monocotyledon grain or rice grain scattering they go to the dead father son is being seven feet long being from wet stick pork the dead head. To this say 'Chinchoo decroo'

Relatives of the dead bringing arrack pouring on him consoles his relatives kith and kins while sleeping at night in a plate keeping ash on that covering with plate nearby keep a bross round vessel filled water waking up early in the morning in that ash pigeon sparrow fox, dog, pig etc cattle birds leg's identification noticing on which line is raised the dead to that race belongs they believe. 3rd day of the death doing this ritual they say "Dadu" or "Kandyakareru". The same day another custom will also be done. To that say 'Songbadheya'.

At evening all the relatives joining cutting goat with the meat bringing arrack preparing cook console the dead person's relatives. 12th and 13th day of died person doing ritual all the relatives joining to the death person offering giving do eating.

Imagination of Special Deity

In tribal's the brave/elders who served for the community considering as good system is there on this background lambanees cultural brave persons a big list itself is there. This list day by day is growing only such leaders worshipping as deity on the occasion brave used materials making god's idol is a specialty. To this study conducted P.D. Kosambi to the deities of tribal any clear man form is not being regarding attracts notice. Today in lambanees prominent is being Bheema Nayak as god his used bow-arrow have become rented only these things are rolling in a blanket binding making god is a notable fact. Similarly, sevalal, Meethuchakya, tha raj and others to twelve list in the gods in the basket concerned braves used things can be seen.

While worshipping elders their photo in this modern worshipped. Earthen pot, bross, small wages, bamboo stick etc being elders representative getting worshipped.

Riddles-Specialty

Lambanees will tell riddles like such tell panch chool, pachees Natha chayismen sattyees subedar (five caste twenty five lineage (Gotra) twenty six group twenty seven subedar) they call riddles 'pada'.

In this community prominently two groups are there. One is 'Jat' and another is 'Bhukiya'. Molan dynasty's being rathod chauhan pawer from these in lambanees total 52 has developed can be seen. Molana dynasties are not being 12 lineage's (baliyararad) wadabiya saying group joined later. Maloon dynasties Rathod groups 'Bhukiya' saying Rathod group is 'Bhukiya' saying chauhan and pawer groups are called as 'Jat' wadatiya saying group join to 'Jat' group Bhukiya group's Rathod group, 'Jat' chauhan, pawar with wadiya group's 'alliances' (marriage settlements) can be done. Because of that only wadatiya groups with rathod chauhan and pawer group can be done blood relationship.

Separate Judicial Panchayat

In lambadees to their community only reserved panchayat system is there. They call 'Gor-Panchayat' Generally Tanda's temple or to that reserved panchayat platforms and in other important places judicial panchayat assembles. Lambani Gor panchayat is formed like this,

- Nayak 2. Karabari 3. Davasan 4. Panchas.

Apart from these for panchayat organization to assist these people 1) Dhaliya (Valikar) village assistant 2) dhadi (Gayaka/Singer) 3) Navi ckhaurik/Barbar will be there.

Like such lambanees 'Gor' panchayat system is being formed, it is a kind of systematic union.

In the Indian society system found coming caste panchayat is different being this judicial system not only is working for religion protection system it is working for social justice is found coming.

Unique Houses Construction;

Lambanees especially so-far dwelt in complete round huts only. Only tree (wood) and from grass roundly constructed such houses from one side to another side to transfer they were convenient. Not only human beings but also to god such huts were constructed (Now also in several Tandas lambani deities have dwelt in such huts saying is special notable.

Their house from huts too little extent wall raising forest's grass covering manner to houses the development is achieved. At one side dwelt after wall huts being built is undisputed fact. Now upper story houses are lambanees specialty.

Lambanees houses door's height is very less. None should enter the house's straight. The head should bend enough to enter the house. This is the view of lambani tribal's world. To human unwanted proud and ego giving up to liar politeness is the simple message of this.

Now-a-days Lambanees constructing in up stair houses podium construction is common to others podium entrance is very rare.

Food System

Lambanees food system's some specialties are as follows. Lambanees basically non-vegetarians. Hill, mountain valley and in forest areas they are residing there available coconut, palaso, orange, mango, grapes, dates banana, purple berry, lime fruits animal-birds, water animals hunting use them for food. Even being non-vegetarians not eating all animals' meat some special animals also creatures living in water meat only they use. Among animals goat sheep hens in water creatures fish, crab, tortoise they use among birds peacock, mule, kaujuga only they use.

Lambanees in food grains regionally in use jawar, wheat barley and monocotyledon grain Indian millet etc; they use 'Bhati khavato Mata' means 'eating pan cakes made from jawar getting strong' saying quotation is relevant in them. They pancakes of jawar like most it indicates in daily meals when there is no cury usually concerned fields available variety typed leafy vegetables pound or with meals raw only use leafy vegetable is easily available thing to these people costly vegetables purchasing eating is rare. Sometime onion garlic, chilly; mixing salt crushing nicely cattani preparing with the jawar flour's pancake they eat. If flour pancakes are hard in the plate breaking them into pieces in the enough ratio water, salt, chili powders mixing eat with flour pancake cattani if the onions are there. It is enough (Dr. P.K.Khandob 1991 P.58).

Special Astrology Methods

In lambanees especially uniqueness feeling fortune (astrology) asking methods are there. In them regarding rain asking methods one or two may be here published.

Pot Catching

Before god's temple applying dung to ground to there. Tanda's from all houses brought grains pouring a heap make a big pile. After filling that pile keep the filled earthen pots after that folding hands to god each rain's name telling that pot being two people face to face standing touch. Then the pot rotating formed on that years rain extent they decide the pot rotating fast if the water spreading in enough extent rain might come is the belief.

Long Pipe Blolfiftng

Long flute is called 'Pipe' god's two long pipes worshipping before gods temple in the presence of elders of the village two expert long pipe blowers blow the pipe. If the rain is about to come pipe has to blow continuously or not be blown saying 'identity' will be asked. Like that years rain falling extent is making known.

A Deep Dependence oh Blood Relation

Tribal essence is only blood relation except these to them any other blood relation is not there. Their marriage has to be held in blood relation only. Inter sub caste too marriage relation is a rejection one village bringing or giving some where is a prohibition. Bringing bride and giving sister-in-law and to brother-in-law have special concerns and privileges might be there is a specialty. To these people if there is an inevitability to develop relation with other community and caste arising in the form of brother-in-law (uncle) elder brother in notable.

Very Much Purity

Lambanees purity imagination is very much complexes is known from these podium houses going on disputes only is coming to known. This community's a person another caste's

house entering is a big crime saying, thinking or touched the other castes saying excelling from the community, such several facts if we consider we can understanding the lambanees purity's form. This sanctity's some more points are as follows.

- In community it one's remains after meals others must not eat. Remains after means spoils seven houses saying with belief in these one's remains after meals eating other's compulsory banned.
- In some other community houses meals cannot be done. Not only has that kilarees temple priested etc cultural people in their own houses in the plates of others they must not eat anything separate plates must be kept for them.
- Another specialty is while journeying from one place to other public vehicle was banned; now it is loosened. Now a days if public vehicle climbing we become impure having feeling only going to towns by walk only we have seen. Now also before this traditional people in government busts without travelling can be seen.

Now on this restriction background this commonly people with other community related manage and other social relations developing is not possible. Here the notable fact is not behavior, the persons who lost sanctity should be sent out from the community is common usual fact. Even then for all type of mistakes, excuses is there purifying some models are there. The person who has gone under punishment, if he desires to coming back in to community purifying him taking back to community types liberal and generous methods are also here.

The Life Very Close. to Forest

"Tribal people generally their happiness and sorrow occasions approaching before the nature. There they get

solution is available saying sure belief is with them" (Krishnamurthy Hanooru 1997-98). To all this responsible is tribal communities took birth and developed in forest only. Lambanees community also near to forest lived-living tribal. Tanda's which are nearby towns bringing fire wood from forest selling them in towns from that heading the life can be seen.

Today lambanees dwelling all Tanda's if we consider delicately before this those region were full of thick forest is known not only that even today several lambanees tanda's from forest equipments is very much influenced and depended.

Separate Language

Especially Bellary district's surrounding's in community 'Gorboli' saying language is prevalent. Hindi and Kannada mixed 'Gorboli' has become changed is identified be researchers.

With this entire cultural specialty living lambanees in Karnataka tribals only maintained a special place. Modern period's on this occasion tribal caste's cleanline is disappearing even then some communities being tribal has become a complete caste saying, deciding to which occasion saying, regarding, thinking-Nirmal Kumar Bose told another here is to be referred tribal's birth, marriage death these three situations to Brahman's priest (purohit) not giving an opportunity they only conduct. How far this situation will be remaining so far tribal its original form, independence loosing becoming a caste it will be change (Ref: T.N. Shankar Narayan, 1982-83)

This talking to lambanees community if we see, result will be declared.

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